

The International Magazine of Rendering

December 2019

# Render

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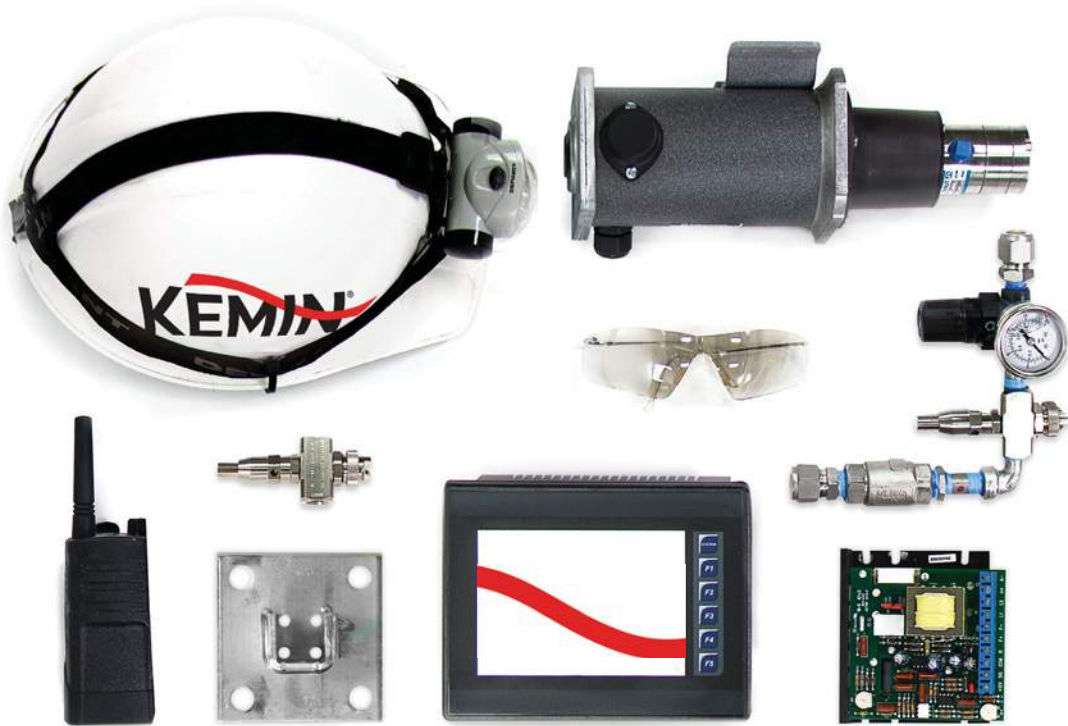
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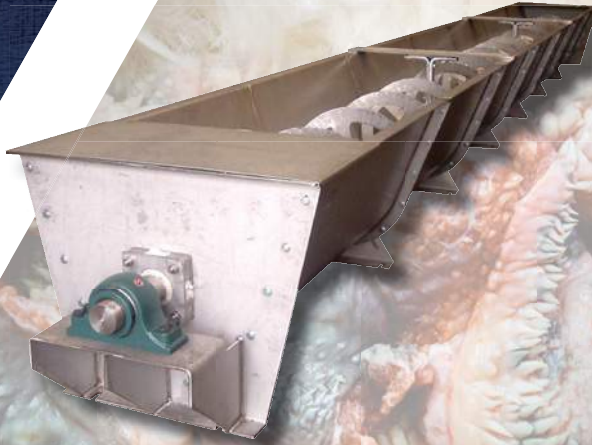


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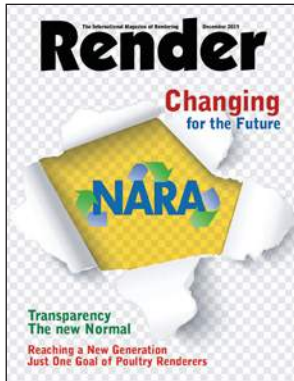
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The North American Renderers Association (NARA) unveiled its new name at its annual convention. **p. 10**

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# Renderitorial

“Ch-ch-ch-changes, turn and face the strange ch-ch-changes.” David Bowie himself could not have sung it better. The rendering industry has seen change before and endured (think back to the “cow that stole Christmas” in 2003). Change is like taxes—inevitable—but it can also be constructive, beneficial, energizing, and rewarding.

Known as the National Renderers Association for 86 years, the advocacy group has changed its name to the North American Renderers Association (NARA). The new name not only now reflects its renderer members both in the United States and Canada, but also offers a unique acronym—NARA—that will stand on its own and not be confused with more prominent groups. A completely revamped website brings a vibrant change to NARA’s online presence and ensures government, industry, customers, and consumers will find a clear and concise message on the benefits the rendering process and its products bring to the global community.

The Tech Topics column in this issue of *Render* takes a musical look at changes in rendering process controls throughout the past decades. From large kettles and fires that needed continuous tending, to state-of-the-art wireless systems now in place, rendering process controls have certainly changed and provide enhanced benefits to both worker and company.

Another change this year is the location of *Render’s* offices. Based in California since its founding in the early 1970s (first in Southern California, then up north), the international magazine of rendering is now assembled in various locales as its editor and her husband explore the beautiful United States. No longer is it necessary to work in a fixed structure (thanks to expanded cellular coverage that provides online access), so *Render* has taken to the road. Traveling in a 32-foot “home on wheels” also provides comfortable accommodations when attending industry meetings, and eliminates the expense and perils of airlines and hotels. Full-time RV living also means ideal weather can be pursued during the harsh winter months.

Change can be strange and difficult, but it can also be worth it. **R**

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## Tales of Congressional Chaos

It is that time of year again: square in the middle of major holidays. For those who dog the United States (US) federal government, it is that time of year when mental, emotional, and physical health are threatened by senators' and representatives' mad dash to recess this first year of the 116th Congress.

It behooves me to try and tote up what has been accomplished and what is still to be completed. Given this column is being typed well in advance of its publication, below is what has become an annual prediction of outcomes and setting up what to look forward to in 2020. All that follows is framed by two words: impeachment and election, with the former certainly impacting the latter. Let us not forget there are 18 Democrat candidates chasing their party's presidential nomination and more are expected to declare. President Donald Trump is in full-blown reelection mode and the entire House of Representatives and one-third of the Senate are up for reelection.

Let us get the impeachment fracas out of the way. Not to put too fine a point on the process, Democrats call the information gathered so far "disturbing," while the president and his party loyalists refer to the process as a "sham," a "joke," and "made-for-TV fiction." If it has not happened already, expect Trump to be impeached by the House. When the political dust ultimately settles, the Senate will not convict the president of the House charges.

The House will approve charges—articles of impeachment—heavily spiced with allegations of bribery and/or extortion. House Democrats allege the president misused his office by making US military aid approved for the Ukraine contingent upon the president of that country investigating former Vice President Joe Biden, a leading Democrat candidate for his party's 2020 presidential nomination, and his son, Hunter, specifically the younger Biden's seat on the board of Burisma Holdings, a major Ukrainian natural gas producer. While analysts contend House Democrats want to vote on the articles of impeachment before Christmas, there is no guarantee of that timeline given multiple committees may want to get involved in the formal inquiry process. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) decides who gets to play in the impeachment sandbox and she wants impeachment off her desk and off the chamber floor by year's end to keep it as far away as possible from the general election and Democrat presidential primaries.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) has publicly commented that the Senate will take up articles of impeachment (he says he has no choice) if/when they come over from the House, but gives no timeline. At least one senior Republican senator opines the Senate trial could take six to eight weeks, but that estimate has been shouted down by his colleagues.

Impeachment per se is a cross-pollinated legal/political process by which a legislative body brings charges of misdoing against senior government officials that may or may not lead

to a targeted official losing office. Impeachment is a tool used at the federal and state government level and is not a process used exclusively to oust a sitting president. Rather, the US Constitution gives Congress the authority to impeach and potentially remove from office "the president, vice president, and all civil officers of the United States" (including the president's appointees, such as cabinet members, administrators, commissioners, federal judges, etc., who have "significant authority") who are alleged to have committed "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors." While most prosecutors know treason and bribery when they see it, the Constitution does not define these grounds, so a debate always rages around what exactly constitutes "high crimes and misdemeanors."

The impeachment roller coaster starts in the House. The Constitution gives the House the sole power of impeachment (i.e., the authority to investigate and bring charges against an official). This process is roughly analogous to an indictment by a grand jury. Charges are filed, evidence given, then the chamber votes on articles of impeachment. The targeted official is impeached by a simple 51 percent majority vote of "those present and voting."

The second half of the process is a Senate "trial" on the House-approved charges. If the impeached official is the president, then the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States presides. Senators from both parties are appointed to lead the opposing sides of the floor trial process. The trial is generally considered to be the floor debate leading up to a vote, and there is no limit on how long this process may take. Following debate of the evidence provided by the House, a two-thirds supermajority vote of those present is needed to convict. If convicted, the official is removed from office.

Two sitting US presidents have been impeached and a third was well on his way. President Andrew Johnson (D) was accused in 1868 of violating the Tenure Act when he tried to fire his secretary of war. President William J. Clinton (D) was accused in 1998 of perjury and obstruction of justice in the wake of Independent Counsel Ken Starr's investigation of the Monica Lewinsky scandal. Both Johnson and Clinton were acquitted by the Senate. President Richard Nixon (R), accused in 1974 of obstruction of justice, abuse of power, and contempt of Congress, resigned from office before the full House voted on formal articles of impeachment.

If Trump is convicted—which will not happen—Vice President Mike Pence would immediately take the oath of office and become the 46th US president. As when Nixon resigned and Vice President Gerald Ford became president, Pence would select his own vice president, subject to congressional approval.

Members of Congress cannot be impeached: each chamber polices and judges its own, following its own rules, including authority to expel bad actors. In modern times, 1980 saw Representative Michael Myers (D-PA) expelled for bribery



as part of the Abscam influence peddling/bribery scandal. Representative Jim Traficant (D-OH) was expelled in 2002 after being convicted of bribery, racketeering, and tax evasion.

Pelosi, who for months resisted calls from her Democrat colleagues to formally launch impeachment proceedings, must now prove to the American public that House Democrats can both conduct the broader legislative business of the House while pursuing impeachment of Trump, or as one of her colleagues asserted, “show folks we can walk and chew gum at the same time.” The challenge for House Democrats who are eager to retain control of their chamber while dreaming of taking back both the Senate and the White House is to parse issues so that those politically contentious are disposed of by the end of this year or early in 2020. All this while progressive and/or voter-friendly issues are ballyhooed throughout the presidential primary season (the Iowa caucuses kick off that marathon on February 3, 2020), insulating the party’s platform in the runup to the November 3, 2020, general election.

Madame Speaker dodged a couple of fiscal bullets earlier this year when the House and Senate, with Trump’s blessing, agreed to a two-year budget resolution setting spending limits along with automatic adjustments to the federal debt ceiling. This action was politically beneficial to both parties, pushing the traditionally contentious budget battles out beyond the November 2020 election. Keeping the government fully funded in fiscal year 2020 and avoiding a second embarrassing partial or complete government shutdown is Pelosi’s current challenge.

By the time this issue of *Render* is published, the federal government is likely operating under its second continuing resolution of fiscal year 2020, which began October 1, 2019,

a short-term fix to keep operations funded until just before Christmas. By running right up to the holiday, sufficient pressure on lawmakers is exerted to move both chambers to craft an agreeable series of “minibuses” (packages of three or four spending bills approved in succession) or an omnibus spending package funding the government through the end of September 2020. It is most likely an omnibus spending package was crafted and approved, one which Trump blessed.

The ink should also be nearly dry on congressional ratification of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), the tripartite trade pact worth nearly \$1 trillion in annual income to the three signing nations, and about \$40 billion yearly in cross-border tariff-free trade for US agriculture. Neither Democrats nor Republicans could withstand the voter outrage if USMCA was not in place going into 2020 primary season. If the United States has approved the deal, then Canada has likely followed suit, given Mexico ratified the treaty in September.

USMCA arguably could have been ratified late last summer, but Democrats were not about to hand Trump a major trade win without putting their own mark on the final treaty. Declaring concerns with how the treaty handled labor, environment, drug pricing, and enforcement issues, House Democrats demanded and got months of face-to-face negotiations with U.S. Special Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer. He conferred with a nine-member Democrats-only working group appointed by Pelosi to “fix” USMCA, a panel headed by Ways and Means Committee Chair Richard Neal (D-MA). Neal also led delegations of his caucus colleagues

*Continued on page 28*

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## Hamilton Presented with Prestigious Award

Over the years, the North American Renderers Association (NARA), formerly the National Renderers Association (NRA), has adapted to meet industry needs, led by the insight and knowledge of its members. The Don Franco Distinguished Service Award was developed to recognize outstanding work by an individual in policy, communication, market development, or innovation. It is presented by the association only when merited.

At NARA's 86th Annual Convention in late October in Carlsbad, California, the Don Franco Distinguished Service Award was presented to Dr. Ross Hamilton, Darling Ingredients Inc., for being an outstanding individual who has led NARA to innovate and has contributed to the programs, standards, and technology it uses today.

"This year's recipient leads with deliberation," said NARA Chairman Ridley Bestwick, West Coast Reduction Ltd., at the award presentation. "He thinks of the potential consequences of actions and looks at the long-term. He sees possible barriers and opportunities long before they become urgent, and develops actionable, practical plans to handle them. This year's Don Franco award winner puts the benefit of the entire industry ahead of individual companies when working on safety and sustainability. So much so that many in rendering have said, 'When Ross Hamilton speaks, he speaks for all of us.'"

Hamilton grew up in rural Texas where he met his wife, Phyllis. Both attended Texas Tech, which is where he got started on the path that led him to rendering. During an outdoor class, a professor asked that anyone interested in judging livestock contests remain seated on the fence. Hamilton was too nervous to leave in front of everyone, saying his feet "just wouldn't move," so he stayed. He tried livestock judging and grew to love it, opening the door to important connections that later helped in pursuing higher education.

Hamilton finished his master's degree at Texas Tech then moved to Missouri to start a family and obtain a PhD. Two boys and a doctorate later, the Hamiltons moved to South Dakota,



NARA Chairman Ridley Bestwick (*left*) congratulates Ross Hamilton on receiving the Don Franco Distinguished Service Award.


where they added another boy to the family. Hamilton spent several years working in the South Dakota State University Extension Service, where he began meeting renderers. The organization provides farmers, ranchers, agri-business people, communities, families, and youth with the research-based information needed to succeed. Hamilton spent 10 years as a professor and researcher at the university. South Dakota is where he began contributing his knowledge to the Fats and Proteins Research Foundation (FPRF).

After South Dakota, Hamilton moved back to Texas, where his family resides today, to work for Darling Ingredients. Early in his career at Darling, he realized that if he wanted to move forward, he needed to keep learning and change direction when necessary, a lesson he has applied to the rendering industry as well. Throughout his career, Hamilton has offered the knowledge and insight needed to respond to unexpected, acute crises like bovine spongiform encephalopathy, African swine fever, and pentobarbital contamination. He has also taken a long-term view and challenged the industry to keep moving forward. Hamilton was instrumental in developing the Rendering Code of Practice a decade before Congress passed the Food Safety Modernization Act. He also saw the value of sustainability years before it became a consumer priority, which now drives markets. Hamilton urged NARA to develop a strategic plan for the future that is used today.

"As chairman for both NARA and FPRF, and as an expert resource on rendering topics, Hamilton has been a mentor to many," Bestwick continued. "He has used his insight, vision, and leadership to promote rendering safety, sustainability, and adaptability. Decisions affecting rendering are rarely made without consulting Ross at some point. As a leader, Ross brings out the best in those around him and gets everyone to work toward what is best for the industry." **R**



Ross Hamilton (*left*) is "crowned" NRA chairman in 2013 by fellow renderers and NRA executive board, Tim Guzek, Sanimax, and Ridley Bestwick, West Coast Reduction.



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# Changing for the future

*An organizational name change and redesigned website for the North American rendering industry will help further propel its sustainability messages.*

By Tina Caparella

“**T**here is nothing permanent except change,” according to Greek philosopher Heraclitus, and that is exactly what the rendering industry is going through, beginning with an organizational name change from the National Renderers Association to the North American Rendering Association (NARA). The new name and a redesigned website were front and center at the group’s annual convention held in late October in Carlsbad, California. Biofuels, pet food markets, trade barriers, and African swine fever (ASF) were also topics of great interest during the week-long event.

The name change came after years of discussion that a rebranding would propel NARA’s messages further into the future by choosing a moniker inclusive of Canadian members and an acronym that stands on its own. The revamped website at [www.nara.org](http://www.nara.org) is crisp, easy to navigate, and full of infographics and material that illustrates the sustainability of the rendering industry. A member’s only section has been added to provide pivotal industry updates on various NARA activities affecting its members.

NARA leadership also changed at this year’s convention. Elected to serve the next two years was Doyle Leefers, National Beef, chairman; Mike Smith, Valley Proteins, first vice chairman; and Jim Long, Darling Ingredients, second vice chairman. In addition, Dr. David Meeker, senior vice president of NARA scientific services and director of research for the Fats and Proteins Research Foundation, announced his retirement for the end of 2020, so NARA will begin the search for his replacement early next year.

One of the biggest challenges NARA contends with on behalf of its members are issues regarding biodiesel and renewable diesel, both big markets for rendered fats and oils. Several speakers at the convention painted two different pictures of the United States (US) biofuels industry:

1. First, expired tax credits and small refinery exemptions from the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) are forcing many biodiesel producers to reduce or halt production, thus purchasing less feedstocks, including animal fats and used cooking oil.
2. Meanwhile, renewable diesel producers are expanding production due to low carbon fuel standards driving West Coast markets. In addition, some petroleum producers are now co-processing using tallow and

used cooking oil, often taking product that once went to international markets that have since closed.

Kurt Kovarik, vice president of federal affairs for the National Biodiesel Board, showed that there is currently more than three billion gallons of biodiesel and renewable diesel being produced in the United States out of 4.2 billion gallons of registered capacity, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Planned projects will expand production by 2.5 billion gallons over the next five years, most of which is renewable diesel. Kovarik highlighted the exciting growth of used cooking oil and other rendered fats as feedstock for biodiesel over the years, both of which now account for one-third of all feedstocks, the second largest after soybean oil at just over half of all feedstocks. Although the challenges of feedstock availability and federal policy are stifling the biodiesel industry’s growth at this time, state policies have been a lifesaver, especially California’s Low Carbon Fuel Standard. Kovarik said there is still more work to be done to ensure a stable and thriving biodiesel industry in the future.

Darling Ingredients Inc. takes a three-legged stool approach to the biofuels industry as a renewable diesel manufacturer, a feedstock provider, and a small biodiesel producer. John Bullock, executive vice president of the company’s North American specialty businesses, explained that biodiesel and



NARA leadership for the next two years are (from left) Michael Smith, Valley Proteins, first vice chairman; Doyle Leefers, National Beef, chairman; and Jim Long, Darling Ingredients, second vice chairman.

renewable diesel are great products for the environment, farmers, and the rendering industry, and each has its place in the market. He declared that government programs for these fuels are necessary because they make life better for people by helping to reduce particulate matter in petroleum fuel. In addition, one-third of all corn oil, soybean oil, and both animal fats and used cooking oil combined are used in biofuel production, which creates domestic demand and consumption of these products as export markets are never guaranteed. Bullock added that generation X and millennials have different environmental views than previous generations and are great supporters of a sustainable future, which rendering and biofuels are part of. He informed attendees there will always be controversy with the petroleum industry surrounding the RFS and tax credits as the infrastructure to use these fuels is a capital cost to refiners.

One petroleum producer embracing biofuels is BP. Jason Breslaw, the company's business development manager of biodistillates, attempted to demystify co-processing for renderers. BP has realized it needs to change for the future since global energy demand will rise by one-third as the population increases and lowering emissions is essential to tackle climate change. While a very small part of BP's operation, co-processing operations are occurring all over the globe. Co-processing is taking an existing petroleum refinery and making minor modifications to bring in renewable feedstocks such as animal fats and used cooking oil and blend them at rates of five percent or higher. The fuel is then easily transported through existing infrastructure to reach consumers. BP's Cherry Point refinery in Blaine, Washington, has been co-processing since 2018. Breslaw emphasized that a variety of feedstocks need to be considered to meet future demand not only in the United States but around the world so BP is "open for business. We're excited about this. It's necessary," Breslaw concluded.

Pet food markets were another topic addressed by convention speakers. Dana Brooks, president of the Pet Food Institute (PFI), encouraged renderers to be proud of their part in the ingredient sustainability story. PFI plans to share more about its partnership with these types of suppliers in the future, including a joint project with NARA to collect data on the amount of animal fats and proteins used in pet food manufacturing.

Amy Parker, ingredient sales at Elmira Pet Products in Canada, noted that animal proteins and fats in pet foods are still popular with consumers and important to pet nutrition. She emphasized that renderers need to be consistent in their process and continue to educate raw material suppliers at keeping foreign material out of collection bins. Parker shared how one salmon producer labeled a raw material container "for pet food" instead of "inedible" to paint a clearer picture to workers of where the products eventually end up.

Evidence of the need for further collaboration between renderers, pet food manufacturers, and researchers can be seen in the growing interest in the Pet Food Alliance (PFA) developed by the Fats and Proteins Research Foundation (FPRF) and Colorado State University. Dr. Jennifer Marten of Colorado State revealed that alliance membership has grown 325 percent since it was formed in 2017 and \$30,000 has been raised for research projects. The group's April 2020 meeting following the Pet Food Forum in Kansas City, Missouri, will have an enhanced technical program and roundtable discussions to include speakers from the Food and Drug Administration and food safety companies. PFA is committed to finding solutions to key issues determined early on: consumer perception and sustainability, product oxidation, and *Salmonella* and product safety. A survey of members showed inconsistent sampling methods were being used for peroxide values, and a transportation survey has been developed to determine how trucks are being cleaned out to avoid *Salmonella* recontamination of product. Marten explained that an important opportunity for PFA is exposing students to industries they know nothing about, given that these individuals are the next workforce.

"Rendering is not a conversation being held in academia," she commented. "PFA has changed that."

Randy Russell of the Russell Group and NARA's Washington, DC, lobbyist provided his take on all things government. He said trade is critical to agriculture, especially approval of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement as

Canada is America's number one

export market followed by Mexico. Today, \$40 billion in ag exports go to these two countries, up from \$9 billion in 1993 when the North American Free Trade Agreement was put in place. Presidential impeachment activities on Capitol Hill, however, will put all trade agreements and other matters on hold for the time being. Russell commented that there have been three presidential impeachments in America's history and none were convicted, although President Richard Nixon resigned prior to impeachment.

As for the 2020 US election, Russell predicted that Elizabeth Warren will be the Democrat party's nominee based on her campaign, and the biggest challenge for Republicans will be changing voter demographics. One of the key drivers for next year's election, which includes the presidential race, is the lowest US unemployment rate in 50 years across all ethnic groups.

A regular and popular speaker at NARA's convention returned with a look at the livestock industry. Randy Blach, CattleFax, reported that predictions indicate China has lost about 50 percent of its hogs to ASF, pushing its pork prices



David Levine (right), Smithfield Foods, talks strategy with Smithfield colleagues, several of whom were attending the NARA convention for the first time. From left is James Couch, Scott Herrman, Edrick Cooper, and Chin Saw.

Continued on page 12

five times higher than US prices. China provides 20 percent of the global protein supply so losing half of its hogs is serious, according to Blach, who showed that 67 percent of Chinese pork imports came from the European Union (EU) because the United States does not have a trade agreement in place with China. China is ramping up its poultry production in an effort to replace the lost pork, and in mid-November, reopened its borders to US poultry and poultry products for the first time since January 2015 after an outbreak of avian influenza in the United States. China's pork consumption per capita is 88 pounds, poultry is 18 pounds, and beef is 13 pounds.

US meat protein production (except turkey) is at record levels, especially pork, with exports at 19 billion pounds this year, equating to 45 pounds per person on average. "We have a pretty amazing machine here," Blach commented, referring to America's safe food process and trade markets. Although demand for high quality beef is up 50 percent, cattle hide and offal values have plummeted in the last five years, from \$230 a head in 2014 to \$114 head this year due to hides being replaced by alternative leathers around the world.

NARA's convention luncheon speaker, futurist Lowell Catlett, gave an entertaining look back on how far things have come in the past 50 years when the world watched Apollo 11 land on the Moon. He shared that in 1969, "corporate" Walmart did not exist; today the company is a juggernaut that has changed the retail world with 11,400 stores worldwide. In 1969, there were 220 million people in the United States, 21 million in Canada, and 50 million in Mexico. Fifty years later, there are 330 million people in America, 37 million in Canada, and 127 million in Mexico. Catlett noted that global agriculture has quietly been changing in the background over the past five decades. In 1969, agriculture produced enough food to provide 2,450 calories per person per day; today that figure is 3,200 calories. Animal production yield is up 50 percent since 1969 while inputs are down 25 percent and carbon emissions output is down 20 percent.

"We're feeding more people better today than ever before," Catlett stated.

### A Trip Around the World

Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and Brazil were well represented at the NARA convention. Sjors Beerendonk, Darling Ingredients and president of the European Fat Processors and Renderers Association, informed attendees that although 95 percent of consumers are meat eaters, "eating meat has become something of a guilty pleasure. It is obvious our world is in transition." He noted that 96 percent of meat by-products are being reused, which is an amazing story, and ASF remains a threat in the EU, primarily in wild boar and some domestic pigs in Eastern Europe. Beerendonk

confirmed that EU pork exports to China, primarily from Spain and Germany, are skyrocketing, which, of course, impacts the rendering industry.

Andy Bennett, president of the Australia Renderers Association, said the story down under is "drought, drought, drought, then a massive cyclone hit Queensland," and 600,000 head of cattle died and could not be rendered due to the poor condition of the animals. Australian renderers continue to have trade issues with China (closed since 2013), Indonesia (closed more than 12 months but audits have now begun), and Thailand. Australia authorities are getting nervous as ASF has now been discovered only 500 miles off the Darwin coast and travelers are routinely caught smuggling pork meat into Australia.

Bennett also reported on New Zealand's rendering industry, which he described as a little country that pumps out a lot of product, with 95 percent of it being exported. More sheep are produced in the country so fats have higher free fatty acids, but they are still being used in biodiesel.

Switching the focus to Brazil was Lucas Cypriano of that country's rendering association, who reported that two-thirds of Brazil's land is still forest while 30 percent

is devoted to agriculture. The number of independent renderers rose slightly in 2019 to 118, albeit down from 169 in 2010, and as of October 2018, fallen animals can no longer be used in feed. The Brazilian renderers association has published an informative video on their rendering industry and posted it on YouTube at [youtu.be/vJUBtXxvqek](https://youtu.be/vJUBtXxvqek).

The Canadian Renderers Association held a brief meeting during the NARA convention to discuss issues, including Canada's request to the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) to be granted negligible risk status for bovine spongiform encephalopathy. Data on ruminant meat and bone meal production and details regarding the controls on specified risk material disposal put in place by the rendering industry are a key part of the submission to OIE.

Consideration is also being given on what role renderers might play should an outbreak of AFS occur that would result in the loss of export markets and the necessity to quickly downsize Canada's swine herd. It is estimated that 300,000 healthy hogs per week may have to be culled, which far exceeds the rendering industry's capacity. Other topics addressed were the ongoing issue of government policy over *Salmonella* control that has created challenges for the rendering industry, a government initiative to develop a clean fuel standard, and export issues, in particular, the recent requirement by Thailand to conduct a system audit in order to continue to permit the export of poultry meal.

NARA's next convention is scheduled for November 3-6, 2020, in Naples, Florida, and the association's new website can be viewed at [www.nara.org](http://www.nara.org). **R**



Andy Bennett, president of the Australian Renderers Association, discusses rendering down under where drought and export markets are creating challenges.

# Going to the Dogs

As part of its sustainability commitment, the North American Renderers Association (NARA) has been holding an annual auction at its convention for several years to raise funds for Canine Companions for Independence (CCI) Wounded Veterans Initiative. To date, NARA's members have donated over \$73,000, more than the \$50,000 cost to raise and train one puppy that will ultimately become a service dog provided free to a person with a disability. Due to the association's generosity, CCI will name a future puppy NARA.

Founded in 1975 and headquartered in Santa Rosa, California, CCI has operations located throughout the United States and relies on hundreds of volunteers to raise and train puppies from eight weeks old until they are 18 months old using strict guidelines. These "puppy raisers" selflessly provide their time and money for veterinary care, obedience classes, and all other expenses to prepare a dog for someone neither has yet met. The dogs are then sent to one of several CCI campuses where professionals further train the dogs for an additional six to nine months to perform specific assistance tasks, such as picking up dropped items or detecting a medical emergency, to meet the needs of a person requesting a service dog. Graduations are held four times a year after two more weeks of intense training with the person the dogs will be assisting while living together on the CCI campus. CCI says it is an emotional day for everyone, from the puppy raisers to the professional trainers to the individuals and their families receiving the service dog.



©Canine Companions for Independence

One graduate, Lance Weir, spoke at the NARA 2015 convention to share how a CCI assistance dog turned his life around after a paralyzing canoeing accident sent him into a downward spiral of despair. Today, the Marine Corp reservist veteran is a champion adaptive athlete and enthusiastic spokesperson for the good work CCI and its volunteers do to provide quality service dogs to help persons with a disability lead productive and fulfilling lives.

To ensure the best possible successful placement, dogs are either a Yellow Labrador Retriever or a mix of yellow lab and Golden Retriever. Significant research is involved to ensure breeders are providing healthy puppies that have the proper temperament. Despite this, only about half of all puppies raised and trained will ultimately be placed with a person for assistance due to CCI's high standards. CCI maintains ownership of the dogs so if a dog/person partnership is not working, a new assistance dog can be provided to the person in need. Dogs not placed go on to serve in other careers, such as bomb sniffing, group therapy, and other service positions.

For information on CCI, visit [www.cci.org](http://www.cci.org). To donate to NARA's annual auction, email [co@martycovert.com](mailto:co@martycovert.com). **R**

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# Transparency

## The new normal

By Tina Caparella

Once dubbed “the invisible industry,” rendering companies must now learn to be transparent in this ever-changing world, remarked Randy Stuewe, chief executive officer (CEO) of Darling Ingredients Inc., to several hundred attendees at the National Grain and Feed Association-Pet Food Institute Feed and Pet Food Joint Conference held late September in Kansas City, Missouri. “We are now in a world of full disclosure.”

Stuewe shared how Darling is meeting its obligation to people, plant, and profit—the three pillars of sustainability—and said that rendering is one of the greenest industries on the planet and the number one industry in carbon avoidance. He reported that 10 percent of food animals in the world have been lost in the past year due to African swine fever (ASF), primarily in China, the world’s largest meat producer.

“In my personal opinion, it’s not if it’s coming to North or South America, but when, and can we build the biosecurity and safety systems that have existed in Europe for 20–25 years to quickly combat it, knock it down, and move on,” Stuewe commented. “We also have the challenge of then making our customers once again comfortable that our products [animal proteins and fats] are safe. We see the critical role of rendering not only protecting the planet, but also protecting the health of the people on the planet.”

Darling describes itself as a food, feed, and fuel company that focuses on entrepreneurship, transparency, and integrity—three important core values for all companies. As a publically traded company, Darling currently measures and reports a large variety of environmental, social, and governance criteria that socially conscience investors use to screen potential investments, increasing its level of transparency. Criteria include such things as energy and water consumption,

greenhouse gases emitted, reportable accidents, employee turnover, leadership development, and audits.

“The level of disclosure that is now required in order to be sustainable is eye-opening to me, but you have to disclose what you are doing to be sustainable,” Stuewe stated. “This is the new world we live in today, and it makes us a better company.”

Dr. Steve Solomon, director of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM), believes in government transparency as well. He explained that human and animal health are interconnected, FDA and CVM rely on science and evidence to make decisions, and the animal food industry continues to evolve. Solomon described the new challenges for CVM as being ASF, a deadly virus affecting only swine and not currently present in the United States (US); pigs ear treats contaminated with *Salmonella*; dilated cardiomyopathy in dogs that is potentially linked to grain-based diets; and cannabis products for animals, which are not approved for any use in animals despite some products being marketed toward animal health.

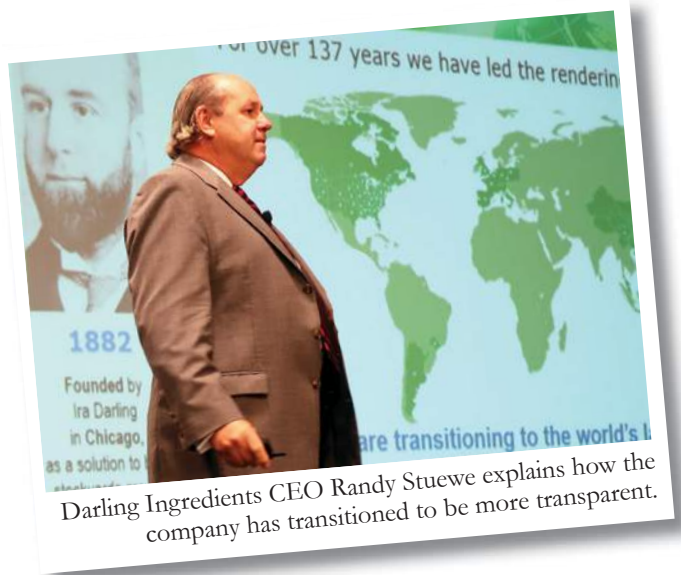
Ambassador Gregg Doud, chief agricultural negotiator for the Office of the US Trade Representative, talked to an attentive audience about trade agreements, first focusing on China, a \$20 billion export market for US agriculture. He talked about the many in-person discussions with China’s vice minister, who always ends the meetings with, “Thank you. I have learned a great deal today.” One important issue addressed is the large number of meat inspectors in the United States, something China does not have.

“They understand the quality of our products, they admire our regulatory system,” Doud stated. “I know people are frustrated and ready for this [trade war] to be over and done with yesterday, but we only have one shot and we have to get it right.” Turning his attention to ASF, Doud disclosed that China produces half the swine in the world (over 400 million pigs) so losing 30 percent of its animals to ASF as reported is the equivalent to all the swine produced in the United States.

“The point is, there is not enough protein in the world to cover that loss,” he said. Other Asian countries—Vietnam, North Korea, and South Korea—are now reporting the virus in their herds. “This is one of the most remarkable mammalian viruses we’ve seen in my lifetime.”

Doud next addressed the Japanese trade agreement, which has been signed by US and Japanese leaders and is similar to what was in place previously. The deal will put US exports on a level playing field with the rest of the world. Japan is the second largest export market for US pet food and feed ingredients, and the number one export market for US pork and beef.

Dr. Cassie Jones, associate professor in the department of animal sciences and industry at Kansas State University, further reviewed ASF from a biosecurity standpoint. She





noted the virus is very much human driven, usually by feeding infected raw meat to pigs or by its presence on clothing or transportation vehicles. While there is no threat to human health and it is not transmissible to non-swine species, the virus is fatal to pigs, is transmitted by wild boar or ticks in domestic pigs, and there is no vaccine. The incubation period is 4 to 19 days and initially appears to be a *Salmonella* infection.

Jones explained that the virus affects the animal food industry as there has been a 30 percent drop in China's feed production. While the method of transmitting the virus is primarily through direct contact, indirect methods (ticks, shoes, transport) are the most likely carriers. She said that feed ingredients should only be contaminated in the country/region with active disease outbreaks, but the concern is that packaging and transport could carry the virus beyond the outbreak areas so US importers need to understand there is risk in the feed supply chain. Single use bags or totes are the best option.

"We know the rendering process destroys ASF," Jones commented several times during her presentation, but there is still a gap in feed industry biosecurity for foreign animal disease transmission by human and vehicle movement. She does not see a way of keeping the virus out of the United States due to its rapid spread around the globe, but she noted she has been wrong twice in the past year when she predicted it would arrive within six months.



US Trade Representative Gregg Doud talks about the complexities of trade.

Randy Blach, CEO of CattleFax, gave an in-depth overview of the protein and feed ingredient markets, starting off by saying the increased volatility in the market is due to the global economy. The principal corn producing countries are the United States (33 percent) and China (24 percent) with China using all its corn to feed pigs so with ASF, they may begin exporting. As for soybeans, the United States exports half of its production, with 60 percent going to China prior to the trade war and ASF.

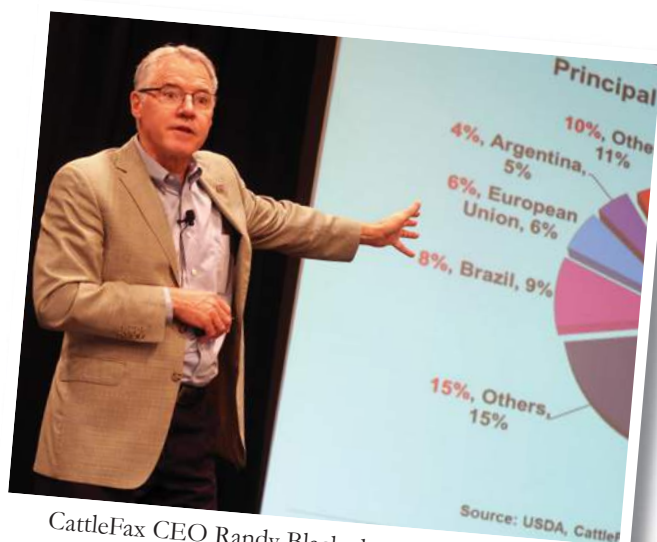
Blach reported there is no such thing as "cow farts" as gas comes from a cow's mouth, and the biggest concern over the "fake meat" trend is labeling as the dairy industry lost 12 to 15 percent of its global market to "fake milk." The number of vegans/vegetarians in the United States has remained unchanged over the past 20 years at five to seven percent of

consumers. Current numbers show record US red meat and poultry production and consumption.

"When consumers have more money in their pocket, they want more protein in their diets," Blach remarked. While only four percent of the world population lives in the United States, the country is the largest beef and poultry producer and third largest pork producer in the world, exporting about 14 percent of its beef, 20 percent of its poultry, and 25 percent of its pork. Despite China losing around 30 percent of its pigs to ASF, the country's large cold storage pork inventories have not yet affected the global pork markets.

Other presenters at the joint feed-pet food meeting included Ansen Pond, director of quality assurance and food safety at Pilgrim's, who talked about a few challenging issues renderers and pet food producers need to work on together, as well as the need to set a precedence for the younger generation coming into both industries. Sue Hays, executive director of the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO), shared that the organization does not regulate, but instead provides animal feed ingredient definitions, model (sample) regulations, a lab proficiency testing program, and a forum for knowledge sharing. Members are state regulators who are not in the business world so industry expertise is needed to build relationships. Current work on pet food label modernization by AAFCO teams will also update pet food model laws.

Hinda Mitchell, president of Inspire PR Group, discussed transparency as it relates to crisis management. She emphasized a crisis should not be a competitive advantage because one company's bad news is everybody's bad news as consumers often cannot distinguish one company from another and will relate the crisis to the product or industry. To be transparent, companies need to develop and maintain a conversation with consumers through social media engagement, videos, and animation, but must also be careful about providing too much information as consumers do not want to know everything. Mitchell mentioned that transparency builds trust, defines a company on its terms, and establishes a foundation. A company's biggest audience and best ambassadors are its employees, so take advantage of this asset. **R**



CattleFax CEO Randy Blach shows how African swine fever in China is creating volatility in the market.

# Reaching a New Generation

## Just one goal of poultry renderers

By Tina Caparella

The Poultry Protein and Fat Council (PPFC) was formed in 1998 in an effort to add value to feather meal since it was selling at a price lower than soybean meal. Today, feather meal prices are about 25 percent higher than soybean meal and PPFC estimates its activities over the past 30 years have added \$1.2 billion in value to the feather meal industry. This and other issues were discussed at the council's annual seminar held in early October in Nashville, Tennessee.

Paul Bredwell, U.S. Poultry and Egg Association, encouraged the rendering industry to get more involved with the organization's college student career program to help educate students about job opportunities in the rendering field. U.S. Poultry's participation in the National FFA Organization to inform high school students about the poultry industry is yet another opportunity for renderers to reach the next generation of employees.

Continuing the focus on workers, David Hammond, Jamesway Incubator Company Inc., talked about navigating a multi-generational workforce, reporting that baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) had been the largest working generation in numbers, but today it is the millennials (born roughly between 1981 and 1996). One important difference between the two generations is technology, which millennials and their predecessors, generation X, grew up with but baby boomers have had to learn.

"Technology is changing everyone's life," Hammond commented, but relationships and one-on-one conversations are still important and need to be developed in the workplace regardless of millennials' dependence on social media and technology for conversation. He said baby boomers must understand millennials' dissimilar mindset that often includes enjoying life more and working less. "They want different stimulus than we [baby boomers] did," Hammond stated. He urged renderers to create an industry brand, such as "we feed the world," to attract and retain new workers who care more about the environment than ever before.

Paul Schlumper, Georgia Tech Research Institute, switched the focus to safety audits, which he described as a snapshot of what is going on in the plant the day of the audit. One important tip is to ensure all processing lines are operating the same so look for inconsistencies between equipment and correct them. The top three serious hazards reported by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in 2015

were machine guarding, fall from heights, and electrical, all top concerns still in 2019. Schlumper remarked that recent OSHA inspections show the top citations issued in 2018 were for powered industrial trucks and lockout/tagout.

"OSHA wants to see a few periodic annual inspections of lockout/tagout, not just once a year," he commented, recommending renderers practice confined space rescues annually. "This just isn't for OSHA, but it's to keep people safe in our facilities."

The shortage of maintenance technicians in the rendering industry was addressed by Darin Greifenkamp, Multi Skills Training Services, who offered three steps in training the right individuals. Step 1: job task analysis, or what the individual needs to know at a particular facility. Step 2: skills assessment by testing to determine the training needs of the individual. Step 3: implement training in both cognitive and hands-on skills. "You can't put a price on conveying experience to the next generation," Greifenkamp said.

Mike Hudlow, Darling Ingredients Inc., shared his involvement with implementing 5S methodology (sort, set in order, shine, standardize, and sustain), something he did not believe in until he noticed the wasted time and energy by plant employees trying to locate items scattered around the facility. He explained the benefits of 5S are: reduces time wasted searching for tools and other items, reduces wasted motion, frees up space, increases safety by eliminating clutter, makes the workplace more efficient, and reduces stress. Another benefit is that during an audit, when a plant is organized under 5S, there is less opportunity for questions

from inspectors. The biggest challenge is getting workers onboard and motivated to organize the workplace. Hudlow suggested starting small by first focusing on one area, such as drawers, corners, toolboxes, or shelves, and expanding from there with the knowledge that complete organization could take a year or longer.

Carlos Zuniga, River Valley Ingredients, discussed the company's foreign material mitigation activities, which begins with all incoming raw material loads being examined by a team for such items as plastic bags, gloves, cans, picker fingers, metal, hangers, and wood. The company also has preventive measures in place at raw material suppliers that includes education/training by video and in person, posters around the raw material bins/barrels and in the break room explaining



Darin Greifenkamp (*right*), Multi Skills Training Services, explains the importance of maintenance to Pauline Lutz and Zach Seward, both of Mountaire Corporation.

that bins are not for trash, and raw material audits that are then shared with the raw material supplier. Zuniga said the biggest challenge is high turnover in processing so training is continuous, but follow-ups with weekly reports and plant visits have provided the best results in keeping foreign material out.

Physical hazards in feed ingredients are also a concern for pet food manufacturers, explained Natasha Bangel-Askren, Hill's Pet Nutrition. The company utilizes magnets at pet food loadout, but it is seeing metal in ingredients they receive. She added that nutritional and physical consistency of pet food ingredients is crucial, especially for the prescription diets Hill's formulates.

Animal proteins and fats are beneficial in aquaculture feeds as well, according to Dr. Rachid Ganga, Tyson Foods Inc., not only nutritionally but also as a cost-effective ingredient for shrimp and salmon feed. "If aquaculture wants to grow [at the expected eight percent annual rate], it needs to use new ingredients as fish meal and fish oil production has been stagnant over the last 10 years," he stated. Ganga showed how salmon farms in Norway are now using 77 percent vegetable proteins in their feed compared to just 11 percent in 1990. He noted that animal proteins and fats are highly digestible, are a better balance of amino acids, raw materials are sourced from inspected facilities, and rendered products are sustainable.

Dr. Annel Greene, Animal Co-Products Research and Education Center (ACREC) at Clemson University, wrapped up the seminar describing the multitude of rendered product research projects being conducted by new younger faculty, providing them an introduction to an industry they never knew about. A new goal at ACREC is to expand and involve multiple agriculture industries and bring new innovative ideas together. **R**



U.S. Poultry's Paul Bredwell encourages renderers to get more involved with university students.



Dr. Rachid Ganga, Tyson Foods Inc., shares the benefits animal proteins and fats provide to aquaculture feed.

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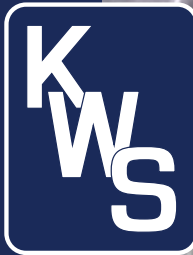
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## Mission Accomplished

*Editor's Note—The following is a speech, in part, given by Ridley Bestwick, West Coast Reduction Ltd., at the North American Renderers Association 86th Annual Convention in late October.*

Two years ago as incoming chairman of the National Renderers Association, my focus was set on working with the board of directors, committees, and staff to continue driving the intentions of the organization's 2020 Strategic Plan. I had six main goals:

1. Improving the association's brand
2. Broadcasting the industry's sustainability message
3. Forming stronger industry alliances
4. Ensuring the financial stability of the association
5. Attracting the "next generation" of leaders
6. Working on a code of conduct policy

Each of these goals is addressed below.

First, the association has changed its name. After 85 years of being known as the National Renderers Association, or NRA, the board of directors approved a change to the North American Renderers Association, or NARA. I am excited that the acronym improves the association's brand, eliminates confusion in the marketplace, and advances the industry's web presence. The new NARA logo retains the integrity of the previous logo that members recognize while also adding a new tag line—Reclaiming Resources, Sustainably.

NARA communications staff engaged in many activities to promote the brand, including:

- *The NARA Update*, a monthly newsletter that provides industry and government news
- Multiple press releases covering NARA's testimony before the Environmental Protection Agency and others on biodiesel tax credits and grease theft
- Social media updates on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter
- The redesign of NARA's website at [www.nara.org](http://www.nara.org) led by Anna Wilkinson, NARA's director of communications

To achieve the second goal—broadcast rendering's sustainability message—more data and better metrics to add credibility to the story were required. NARA engaged a consulting firm to gather data for use in sustainability communications, regulatory and legislative advocacy, and strategic planning. Two data collection projects were started:

- The first is a pet food ingredient study in partnership with the Pet Food Institute (PFI) and American Feed Industry Association (AFIA).
- The second is an economic and sustainability study funded by NARA to aggregate member data and verify industry data estimates.

Dr. David Meeker, senior vice president of NARA's Scientific Services, is leading this charge.

For the third goal of forming stronger industry alliances, NARA successfully expanded its networking and enriched existing industry alliances. Examples include:

- Being active in the agriculture communicators group in Washington, DC
- Strengthening its alliance with the National Biodiesel Board
- Initiating a pet food ingredient study in partnership with PFI and AFIA
- Cooperative research by the Fats and Proteins Research Foundation (FPRF) and Pet Food Alliance on joint challenges of oxidation and product quality, *Salmonella* control, and animal food safety

As for the financial stability of the association, fiscal year 2019 began with uncertainty as to whether the United States (US) farm bill would be passed by Congress. The farm bill provides NARA with approximately \$1.7 million of funding under the Foreign Market Development and Market Access Program. The association would be very different without this funding, so there was relief when the bill finally passed and was approved by President Donald Trump in December 2018, making for a merrier Christmas. In addition, NARA was awarded \$1.25 million of new funding in 2019 from the Agricultural Trade Promotion Program to help find new markets offsetting losses due to the trade war with China. Kent Swisher, vice president of NARA's international programs, was instrumental in securing these funds.

NARA membership remains strong with the addition of six new active renderer members, even through a period of industry consolidation. Overall, NARA has a combined total of 170 active, allied, and associate members. Fiscal year 2019 results from operations show a break-even with unrestricted reserves of approximately \$1.6 million. NARA remains in sound financial condition.

The goal to attract the next generation of leaders will be advanced by the rebranding around the new name, logo, and website. The focused themes of sustainability (renderers are the original recyclers) and education on rendering and its benefits will increase the appeal to younger generations. Another effort to connect with a younger demographic is by increasing NARA's presence on social media, which has grown considerably through frequent posts on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, and by sharing educational infographics, updates, links to published articles, and photos of staff and events. At NARA's fall conferences and spring meetings, new events were added to welcome first-timers and next generation attendees and get them involved. Thank you to those member companies who brought these new attendees to conference; however, there is still work to be done in this area. At over 84 million strong, millennials are America's and Canada's largest generation, eclipsing the current size of the postwar baby boomers. They are defining the market and will continue to do so for years to come, making it essential at getting them more involved in NARA.

The sixth goal was to work on a member code of conduct policy. Code of conduct relates to truth and honesty and, like most associations, it would be wise for NARA to adopt such a

policy. We need to be mindful of how the association is seen and how the industry is interpreted. This is something I did not get to during my term as chairman.

### Other Association Achievements

Following are a couple of other NARA accomplishments this year.

First, the June Washington, DC, fly-in promoted rendering interests to Congress as NARA members and staff teamed with lobbyists from the Russell Group. Priorities included:

- Extending biofuel tax incentives
- Increasing the 2020/2021 Renewable Fuel Standard volume obligations
- Supporting congressional passage of the United States-Mexico-Canada free trade agreement
- Funding for the US Department of Agriculture's foreign market development programs
- Improving rail and road transportation infrastructure
- Promoting rendering's sustainability record

The transition from NARA's previous Washington lobbyist, Steve Kopperud, to the Russell Group has been smooth and the industry is in good hands.

Second, in the spring of 2019, a task force reviewed NARA's 2020 Strategic Plan looking at progress to date and whether there were any new areas needing focus. This resulted in a refreshed strategic plan with similar imperatives:

- Enhancing the image and value of rendered products and services
- Increasing recognition and awareness of the value NARA members deliver to people and community
- Expanding demand for rendered products and services in domestic and international markets

Specific action items for NARA staff and related committees were identified and are currently underway.

In terms of unfinished business, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) this year prohibited the presence of pentobarbital in animal food, which means animals euthanized with pentobarbital cannot be rendered for animal feed. NARA supported efforts to ensure rendering remains a viable disposal option for animal mortalities. Recognizing that non-chemical forms of euthanasia must be used if animals are to be rendered, NARA:

- Distributed a "pentobarbital response kit" to its members

- Requested FDA be more proactive in finding solutions, including setting a tolerance level for pentobarbital
- Appealed to veterinarians to properly manage the drug and use alternative euthanasia methods
- Launched two FPRF research projects

As pentobarbital is a big concern for renderers handling deadstock, there is still more work to be done.

In Canada, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is on track to request negligible risk status for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) to the World Organization for Animal Health in 2020. If approved, possibly in 2021, it appears unlikely that CFIA will depart from Canada's "heavy" specified risk material rules because of consumer perception and confidence. CFIA is also working on new *Salmonella* management regulations that could adversely impact Canadian renderers.

On a personal note, my wife, Kathy, and I attended the Australian Renderers Association (ARA) annual symposium in Hobart, Tasmania, in July where I presented a North America rendering update. The symposium's theme was "the bottom line" with many speakers talking about the opportunity for renderers to supply low carbon intensity feedstocks to biofuel producers. We had a wonderful time in the land down under, being well hosted by ARA Chairman Andy Bennett.

In closing my two years as NARA chairman, there are some important thank yous. Many industry leaders dedicated their time and talent during the past year to NARA's Board of Directors and 12 working committees. Seventy-six individuals serve on these committees and the industry is indebted to them. Many thanks to NARA's Executive Committee, especially Doyle Leefers, first vice chairman; Michael Smith, second vice chairman; and Tim Guzek, immediate past chairman, for their support and assistance over the last two years.

NARA's two overseas offices and consultants play an important role and the industry appreciates their efforts. Thanks to all NARA staff for a job well done, and a special acknowledgement to NARA President Nancy Foster for her leadership during my term.

Finally, I am happy to report that NARA is strong and well positioned to meet the needs of the North American rendering industry in the coming years. I am thankful that BSE did not resurface and that farm bill funding was not lost on my watch. I have really enjoyed the last two years, but look forward to passing the gavel.

NARA is in good hands.

R

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## Steep Headwinds for Biodiesel Industry

The National Biodiesel Board (NBB) is skeptical that an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed supplemental rule released in mid-October will ensure that future biomass-based diesel volume obligations under the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) are fully met. The supplemental notice contains a never-before-discussed proposal to estimate small refinery exemptions (SRE) for 2020 with no assurance that the estimate will come close to actual future exemptions. Instead of recovering the actual gallons exempted from the RFS by EPA, it proposes to recover only those gallons previously recommended for exemption by the Department of Energy (DOE), including where DOE had recommended partial exemptions. The biodiesel industry does not believe the proposal meets President Donald Trump's promise to American farmers and biodiesel producers announced in early October.

Kurt Kovarik, vice president of NBB federal affairs, remarked, "The notice that EPA issued is significantly different from the agreement that biofuel industry champions negotiated with President Trump just two weeks ago, which was to estimate future exempted RFS volumes based on the average of actual volumes exempted over the past three years. EPA is proposing a brand-new method for making the estimate—one that was never previously proposed or discussed and significantly undercounts past exemptions."

Nancy Foster, president of the North American Renderers Association (NARA), added, "NARA strongly supports volume obligations under the RFS that the market believes will actually support production of biodiesel. Uncertainty created by EPA's proposal, which is unlikely to account for actual lost SRE volumes, creates disincentives for biodiesel production, investment, and demand creation."

Sixty different industry groups, including NARA, supporting biofuels and their feedstocks signed on to a letter to Trump in early November urging his administration to change the EPA proposal on how the agency will handle SREs moving forward. The letter expresses that the proposal had swapped out a critical component of the SRE remedy sought by the biofuels industry and farmers. "This one EPA modification converts a commitment to fully account for SREs into a bureaucratically uncertain path that recovers only one fraction of those gallons lost to SREs and could result in RFS backsliding in 2020. This lack of certainty sabotages efforts toward market recovery and will stop biorefineries from reopening," the letter states.

At the same time, a group of Midwest elected officials, including at least seven United States senators, filed similar comments with EPA, urging the agency not to follow through with its proposed supplementary rulemaking. Iowa Senators Chuck Grassley and Joni Ernst, both Republicans, had stern words for EPA and agency Administrator Andrew Wheeler, but fell short of calling out Trump directly for RFS actions taken by his administration in recent months.

In his comments, Grassley highlighted a September 12, 2019, Oval Office meeting that included Trump, Vice President Mike Pence, Wheeler, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, six

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### **Sixty industry groups supporting biofuels and their feedstocks signed on to a letter to Trump in early November urging his administration to change the EPA proposal on how the agency will handle SREs moving forward.**

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Midwest senators, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds, and many staffers, where he was satisfied that SREs, if granted, would not reduce the 15 billion gallon conventional ethanol RFS mandate.

"Now, the way the rule was written and put out for public comment does not deliver on the same understanding I had leaving the Oval Office about what would be in the proposed rule," Grassley commented. "At that meeting, we discussed a very specific proposal to consider the three-year rolling average of actual exemptions granted by EPA, including the specific numbers." Grassley no longer feels confident the RFS will be met because EPA does not have a "good track record" of following DOE's recommendations. Ernst said she left that meeting with the same understanding.

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### **Two Sides of the Biofuels Coin**

In early November, Representatives Abby Finkenauer (D-IA), Kendra Horn (D-OK), and 38 other Democratic members of the House of Representatives sent a letter to Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal (D-MA) urging them to make extension of the expired federal blender's tax credit an urgent legislative priority before the end of the year. NBB thanked the representatives, especially the freshman members, and emphasized that renewing the tax credit before the end of the year is crucial to reviving biodiesel production, reopening shuttered facilities, and saving jobs.

The credit has been lapsed for 22 months, longer than ever before since its inception at the end of 2004, creating a crisis for the biodiesel industry. Several producers have stopped purchasing feedstocks, shut down plants, and furloughed workers in recent months. Darling Ingredients Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Randy Stuewe thinks a three-year extension of the credit is likely to be approved before the new year.

"We believe there is good momentum building around the blender's tax credit, and we anticipate a positive decision by year end," Stuewe said. "It is expected the \$1 per gallon credit will be made retroactive for 2018 and will be extended to cover 2019 and 2020 production." In a conference call with analysts to discuss the company's third-quarter earnings, Stuewe noted that if the tax credit were to be extended, Darling's Diamond Green Diesel joint venture with Valero stands to gain \$78.7 million of earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) for 2018 and year-to-



date, \$99.9 million for 2019. The soonest the company could receive a retroactive payment would be in early 2020, he remarked. Darling also reported that its plant expansion aimed at increasing renewable diesel capacity to 675 million gallons per year (mgpy) is progressing on schedule with expected completion in late 2021. Darling and Valero jointly own the 275 mgpy Norco, Louisiana, plant, the largest renewable diesel production facility in the United States.

Darling also plans to expand its relationship with Valero as it explores advanced engineering and development cost review for a potential renewable diesel plant co-located at Valero's refinery in Port Arthur, Texas. If approved, construction at the 400 mgpy facility would begin in 2021 with expected operations commencing in 2024, resulting in 1.1 billion gallons of total annual production capacity at Diamond Green Diesel. The company has been aggressively seeking expansion of its renewable diesel production, with anticipated production in 2020 at full capacity and anticipated margins conservatively estimated around \$1.40 per gallon.

On the flip side, biomass-based diesel producer Renewable Energy Group (REG) has reported a third-quarter net loss from continuing operations attributable to common stockholders of \$13.8 million compared with net income of \$24.8 million in the same period of 2018. This is the third consecutive quarter in 2019 that REG has posted net losses. The company estimates that if the currently lapsed tax credit is retroactively reinstated for 2019 and 2018 on the same terms as in 2017, REG's adjusted EBITDA would increase by approximately \$77 million and \$70 million for business conducted in the third quarters of 2019 and 2018, respectively. Due to the prolonged lapse of the tax credit, REG has halted construction on a \$30 million improvement project at its 60 mgpy biodiesel plant in Seneca, Illinois, adding that "the 22-month gap since the credit was last in effect and uncertainty about when it would be reinstated forced the postponement of further work on the project that involved nearly 100 contract workers."

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## Meanwhile in California

In late October, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) reported that Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) credit and deficit generation both hit record highs in the second quarter (Q2) of 2019, with deficits slightly outpacing credits and drawing the credit bank tighter. LCFS credit generation increased by 11.5 percent to a record high 3.67 million metric tons generated in Q2, which was up 37.7 percent from the same period in 2018, to bring the 2019 first-half total to 6.96 million credits, up 35.4 percent from the first half of 2018. CARB also reported that 3.92 million deficits were generated in Q2, up 4.6 percent from the first quarter and 24.7 percent from Q2 2018, to push total deficit generation in first-half 2019 to 12.36 million, up 27.2 percent from the same period in 2018. In the first half of 2019, the total renewable diesel and biodiesel volume of 419.13 million gallons was about 22.6 percent of the blended diesel total of 1.86 billion gallons.

In an effort to bolster its presence on the West Coast, NBB has opened an office in Sacramento, California, to be led by long-time CARB division chief Floyd Vergara. He brings more than 32 years of experience at CARB, most recently as chief of the industrial strategies division and as assistant chief of

the research division. Over the years, Vergara has overseen a number of CARB's key climate and air quality programs, including the LCFS and cap-and-trade, among others.

NBB's new office will be co-located with the California Advanced Biofuels Alliance and will bolster the board's presence in an area where climate programs are a substantial market driver for low carbon fuels like biodiesel and renewable diesel. Vergara will serve as director of state regulatory affairs for NBB. He received a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from the University of California, Berkeley; a juris doctorate from the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law; and is licensed to practice in California as a professional engineer and lawyer.

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## Biodiesel Strong in Oregon and Hawaii

Oregon-based used cooking oil collector and biodiesel producer SeSequential recently increased its production capacity at its biodiesel plant in Salem, Oregon, by 50 percent, going from 8 mgpy to 12 mgpy. Acquired by Denver, Colorado-based Crimson Renewable Energy about a year ago, SeSequential employs 275 people and collects used cooking oil from 20,000 customers in Washington, Oregon, and California.

In Hawaii, Pacific Biodiesel Technologies began delivering biodiesel in early November under a contract with Pacific Current Subsidiary, Hamakua Energy LLC. The 5.5 mgpy biodiesel production facility on the Big Island of Hawaii will supply the Hamakua 60-megawatt combined-cycle power generation plant with daily truckloads of biodiesel. The electric plant is capable of providing 22 percent of the Big Island's generating capacity. The deal helps the state achieve its goal of 100 percent renewable energy by 2045 under the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative.

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## NBB Elects New Leaders

At its annual fall meeting in November, members of the National Biodiesel Board (NBB) elected representatives from the industry to serve on the governing board. Members voted to fill seven board member spots for two-year terms:

- Kent Engelbrecht, Archer Daniels Midland
- Chad Stone, Renewable Energy Group
- Ryan Pederson, North Dakota Soybean Council
- Harry Simpson, Crimson Renewable Energy
- Paul Soanes, RBF Port Neches LLC
- Dave Walton, Iowa Soybean Association
- Tim Ostrem, South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council

The board also elected Stone as chairman, Mike Rath, Darling Ingredients Inc., as vice chairman; Rob Shaffer, American Soybean Association, as second vice chairman; Pederson as treasurer; and Troy Alberts, Ag Processing Inc., as secretary. Rath, Shaffer, and Alberts already serve on the 15-member board along with five others. NBB also recognized retiring Chairman Kent Engelbrecht for his three years of dedication and service to the national trade association. This three-year term is the maximum allowed by the association's bylaws.

**R**

## World Renderers Group Keeps Improving

Continuing the work done by the previous World Renderers Organization (WRO) leadership, new WRO president Dr. Martin Alm, Germany, attended the annual meeting of the International Feed Industry Federation (IFIF) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in Rome, Italy, in October. There was good collaboration in education on safe feed production (especially in undeveloped and developing countries), with presentations and discussion on worldwide feed production by industry and FAO. Shortly after that meeting, Alm joined the opening of the third phase of the Livestock Environmental Assessment and Performance



From left, Martin Alm, WRO; Delanie Kellon, Global Feed LCA (Life-cycle Assessment) Institute; LEAP Chair Caroline Emond, International Dairy Federation; and Philippe Bequet, IFIF, at the IFIF/FAO annual meeting.

Partnership (LEAP), an international partnership seeking to develop carbon emission calculation tools for the entire livestock production, including animal rendering. WRO later received written approval of its “observer status” in LEAP. Last year WRO committed to joining the LEAP–FAO partnership for the 2019–2021 phase with a supporting amount of \$25,000 over the three years.

### Manufacturing Handbook

IFIF is preparing a feed ingredient manufacturing process handbook. Three expert groups were created to address the following topics:

1. Feed additives or ingredients from chemical synthesis
2. Feed additives or ingredients from fermentative processes (bacteria, yeast, and fungus)
3. Animal, vegetable, and mineral products and by-products

WRO First Vice President Lucas Cypriano, Brazil, is part of the third group of experts and will collaborate in describing the animal rendering manufacturing process for the manual with the support of WRO’s Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP).

### WRO Activities

WRO’s SAP is reviewing a handbook submitted by the Australian Renderers Association dealing with control of foreign materials in animal rendered products. This manual aims to generate information and recommendations on how to increase by-product compliance with the pet food market. WRO is also working on updating its bylaws with the objective to harmonize current members’ interests and the activities of the WRO leadership. Both the handbook and bylaws should be submitted to WRO members in time for evaluation during the next WRO annual meeting scheduled for June 2020 at the European Fat Processors and Renderers Association Congress in Vilamoura, Portugal.

Finally, the WRO has committed to intensify its communication with affiliated members by creating new means of dialogue. **R**

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# A Timeline of Rendering Controls

How much has process control systems changed since the first rendering plants? Are operators of today up to the high demands for both product quality and consistency? Can a computer be programmed to run a rendering line without direct human interaction? Should a plant be brought into at least the twentieth century, pushing the limits of all available efficiencies?

## “Takin’ Care of Business” (2019)

At this year’s North American Renderers Association annual convention in late October, this author had the pleasure of joining fellow attendees Mike “Elvis” Smith of Valley Proteins and Kevin Jenkins of Jenkins Centrifuge on stage during the final evening’s Halloween party and be a rock star with long blue hair. Come to find out, there are several talented musicians in the rendering industry. After “Elvis” rocked the drums on “Mustang Sally,” Jenkins and I joined the band and performed the song “Takin’ Care of Business” by Bachman-Turner Overdrive. This brief performance was the inspiration to utilize song titles as this article strolls down the historical path of plant control systems and understand how advanced control technology can help take good care of a rendering business.

## “Ring of Fire” (1800s)

Picture this: an open kettle heated by flame, seated atop a crackling fire, with stew bubbling inside. Sounds great, but in the rendering industry in the 1800s, imagine a kettle the size of a living room and trying to keep the fire going and the temperature consistent, stirring the material with large paddles, and constantly skimming the top with enormous strainers. How was automation added into this process? Cutting edge devices like auto-blowers, auto strainers, and auto stirring mechanisms were created. The early Greek and Arabic societies actually had float-valve regulators in devices such as water clocks, oil lamps, wine dispensers, and water tanks. From the late 1800s to the early 1900s, most control system inventions were focused on the basic process activities of controlling temperatures, pressures, liquid levels, and the speed of rotating machines.

## “Electric Avenue” (1882)

Obviously, electricity brought an unprecedented level of advancement to the industrial age. One could argue that electricity is a form of automation in itself. Even though rendering plants in the early days predominantly utilized steam in the process, electricity became the technology of the century, catapulting production numbers and changing the face of rendered product manufacturing forever.

## “Get Back” and “Come Together” (1920–1940)

Process control advancement first came in the form of centralization. Measurement and logging were centralized, but control remained near the machinery. Some rendering plants used color-coded lighting to direct an operator on the floor to perform certain adjustments. Furthermore, remote relay



Control board from the 1970s

controls and sensors came into play, allowing the operators to read all the parameters and make required adjustments.

## “Hit Me with Your Best Shot” (1940–1950)

War time innovation focused heavily on controls that would predict and track targets. Reliability and durability were key developments during this phase. Post-World War II brought together experts from the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and the Soviet Union to develop war-centric control systems that would later be utilized in industrial settings. AT&T Labs focused heavily on extending the bandwidth of its communication systems across North America. MIT’s Servomechanism’s Laboratory devised the concept of block diagrams and simulated control systems still utilized today in designing rendering plant control systems worldwide.

## “Summer of ‘69” (1960s)

Fast forward to the 1960s, and a completely sealed vessel is moving rendered material through a steam injected shaft. There are sensors on almost every aspect of the process measuring motor amperages, steam pressures, middle temperature, exit temperature, inlet speed, outlet speed, add-fat, cooker level, discharge gate open/closed, steam valve position, and numerous other control points throughout the plant.

## “If I Only Had a Brain”

“...to provide means whereby the frequently disastrous results of careless or inattentive manual control and operation of processing apparatus of various kinds may be obviated, and excessive waste and expense in the practice of various industrial processes eliminated.” (Jacob J. Neuman 1933)

Although control and measurement data have always been there, it has been a matter of how to extract it, display it, and control it with consistency. The methods for controlling these aforementioned items have largely remained constant over the last 30 years; however, a few things have been refined. Think of a cooker operator as the wizard behind the curtain in the movie *The Wizard of Oz*, having to look at the temperature, then go adjust the steam valve, look at the level indicator, go to the inlet screw then to the outlet screw, and so on. Then enters Toto the dog to expose the entire operation.

### **“I Want My MTV” (1970–1990s)**

Although cathode-ray tube screens and light-emitting diode displays had been utilized up to this point, supervisory control and data acquisition video screens were not prolific until the mid-1970s. This allowed a rendering plant control to be put on a virtual layout, having the controls visually associated with the machinery. It also gave a visual representation of product flow, plant layout, and infrastructure, allowing for further enhanced flexibility in locating the control view away from the industrial process.

### **“Party Like it’s 1999” (2000s)**

Web connectivity and remote management allow more eyeballs to watch a plant’s operations. Although remote control was very rare, the stage was set for automation functions to be monitored and adjusted by someone other than the operator onsite. This was particularly true of remote technical support for computer networks and corresponding data terminals.

### **“Welcome to the Jungle” (2010 to present)**

Today’s robust Wi-Fi networks and internet connectivity takes centralization and makes it mobile. Operators can stand next to a machine and still have a complete view of the other critical elements within a plant, including key parameters that affect outcome, and the ability to adjust and see results both from a machine as well as the impact up- and downstream in the process. True mobility solutions allow remote access for upper management, equipment vendors, and other corporate staff to look at the real-time operation of the plant and/or download trend data.

Today there are buzzwords like “industry 4.0” (the fourth industrial revolution), Internet of Things, and cloud-based technology. Alongside these new and somewhat vaguely defined breakthroughs are a set of what could be called a “hidden technology.” This combines key parameters and leverages an enormous resource of data in the background of processes using advanced controllers that emulate and granulate the desired method to operate and achieve targeted results.

### **“Stuck in the Middle”**

Like the lyrics go, “Clowns to the left of me, jokers to the right” promising energy savings, throughput increases, better yields, and so on. The rendering industry has operators who have run lines of machinery for decades and all agree there have been some good technological advances and some which just do not work. Plenty of “old school” operators simply do not trust automation. Experts agree that technology for the sake of technology is not progress. Technology must be utilized skillfully and focus on a specific desired result(s). It is important

when choosing a controls partner that they are knowledgeable of a plant’s process and develop a close relationship with plant staff. This will make the employees more comfortable and not feel intimidated by a new system. Following are comments often heard from plant operators:

- *“We have this process automated, but it does not take into account the previous or the next step.”* Many control systems have isolated closed looped automation that only does a single task. Sometimes this is useful in a highly predictable scenario; however, the only thing certain with rendering is constant change. Advanced controls look at multiple inputs and control multiple items to mitigate variances, improve efficiency, and improve overall quality.
- *“We would rather they be out on the floor next to the machines than hiding in a control room.”* There is a delicate balance of having a “feel” for a machine and relying on computers to optimize the process. Mobility combined with advanced process controls has provided the best of both worlds, allowing operators to roam around and be connected to every process within a plant, while the hidden advanced controller is providing the granular control focused on key metrics.

### **“Maybe it’s Time to Let the Old Ways Die”**

Having a 1969 Camaro to cruise around on the weekends is cool, but having a 1969 era control system to run rendering processes every day is certainly not. What are the plans to upgrade controls? Have all available options been examined? Is the controls provider well versed in the rendering industry? How does one choose a controls package that is uniform, easy to operate, and maximizes the value in rendered products? What are the improvements?

### **“The Heat Is On”**

There is good news. Like other industries, control technology is designed to be layered and utilized on machines both old and new. As long as there is a programmable logic controller in a rendering plant that is controlling and/or monitoring a process, an advanced controller can be added. Houses today that have a 1986 furnace, a 2007 air conditioner, and a 2013 humidifier can all be controlled from a cutting edge 2018 Nest thermostat. In this example, the thermostat reports in conjunction with a utility provider to give constant feedback of exact savings.

### **“Man on the Moon”**

To use a line from an R.E.M. hit song, “Andy, are you goofing on Elvis...are we losing touch?” Don’t lose touch. Ditch the Apollo 11 Mission Control technology and upgrade your plant with some of the latest advancements in rendering controls. These improvements will give a company the ability to reduce the costly fluctuations in their rendering process (including large savings in energy consumption each month), increase product throughput, improve yield and quality, implement operational efficiencies, and establish consistencies across the board. Do not get “locked in the punch” and wrestle with control strategy. Newton was beamed by an apple and it turned out well.

**R**

to meet with Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to get personal assurances of their respective national commitments. Lighthizer should be credited with “yeoman’s work,” having avoided returning to the negotiating table to amend the treaty, appeasing the Democrats with side letters and notations of understanding.

### **Biofuels, Trade Wars, and Climate Change**

Other critical economic issues watched by the rendering industry include the White House’s clumsy handling of its contentious biofuels blending rules and Congress’ seemingly inability to figure out how to enact a tax extenders bill everyone pretty much supports. As you read this, the White House should have made farmers, ranchers, renderers, and biofuels makers happy by rewriting its October deal for reallocating lost ethanol/biodiesel demand gallons blamed on the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA’s) generous granting of small refinery exemptions (SREs) from Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) fuel blending mandates. EPA is charged by Congress with mandating each year the amounts of various biofuels (corn ethanol, advanced biofuels that include biodiesel and renewable diesel, and cellulosic ethanol) that must be blended with petroleum. No stakeholder is ever happy with EPA’s proposed blending mandates. For biofuels refiners and their producer/renderer feedstock suppliers, the agency never mandates enough; for petroleum companies, EPA always mandates too much.

At issue now is the future of SREs, an authority enjoyed by EPA allowing small refineries that find the federal fuel blending mandate economically untenable to be exempted from meeting the federal order. The biofuels industry contends Trump’s EPA has been wildly overgenerous when granting SREs, in several cases exempting small facilities owned and operated by international oil companies. This action has cost billions of gallons in lost demand for the alternative fuels, say biodiesel makers, and the administration has done little to improve the situation leading to plant closures and lost jobs. The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) agrees with farmers and biofuel producers.

After several meetings with members of Congress, biofuel/crop producer contingents, and petroleum interests, Trump announced with great fanfare his solution to this dilemma. EPA will continue to grant SREs, but petroleum companies that own big refineries will be required to blend more biofuels to account for (i.e., reallocate) the lost gallons of biofuel demand resulting from SREs. The goal is to achieve a “net” 15 billion gallons of biofuels blended with petroleum each year as mandated by Congress. EPA by now should have manipulated its fuel blending mandate rulemaking to reflect the president’s decision.

The biofuels industry contends it is the victim of bait-and-switch by the White House because while it walked away from Trump’s office pleased with the president’s stated intent, EPA published a notice of proposed rulemaking in October shifting how it will calculate total gallons of biofuels that go unblended when the agency grants an SRE (i.e., how many gallons must be reallocated as part of the fuel blending mandate). A 2019

Department of Energy recommendation slotted 770 million gallons for SRE exemption; the actual number of gallons lost, says industry, is 1.4 billion.

On so-called tax extenders legislation, expect Congress to finally approve—likely by ball-drop time on New Year’s Eve or midnight the day they actually recess for the year—a package of expired or expiring federal tax credits, including the \$1 per gallon biodiesel/renewable diesel blender’s tax credit. That is the good news. The bad news is the extension will likely be for only one year. This is because there is almost guaranteed to be a tax reform duke-out between the two major parties as both will propose major platform planks for their White House aspirants, promising not only longer extensions or permanent status for the various credits included in this year’s package, but possible and needed changes to the 2017 tax reform law. One issue of agreement among those running for reelection in both parties is the need to return full deductibility for state and local taxes, marketed as a move to benefit the middle class voter.

Given the increasing mutual economic pain inflicted on the two countries by their ongoing trade war—not to mention the negative ripple effect on the rest of Asia and parts of Europe—a tariff détente between the United States and China should be in hand. It remains stunning how severely each of the parties underestimated the other throughout the on-again, off-again battle of tariff tirades. When the dust clears on the initial or “phase one” agreement, it will be interesting to see what success or progress will be claimed by either country.

It is assumed the outcome of talks is a much-abbreviated form when compared to how the world’s two biggest economies began negotiations. Trump has most likely rolled back early fall tariff actions and suspended his December 15 threat to slap increased levies on that portion of Chinese exports not already tariffed in prior muscle flexing. This also means the Market Facilitation Program (MFP) shuts down, at least until the next time. USDA used Commodity Credit Corporation borrowing authority and fund transfer leeway to pay for up to \$12 billion in 2018, and up to \$14.5 billion in 2019, in direct payments to farmers, ranchers, and companies economically harmed by lost markets in the wake of US tariff actions against trade partners. Also disappearing will be MFP monies dedicated to joint government/industry export market development (there will be no impact on Market Access Program or Foreign Market Development funding) and USDA surplus commodity purchasing.

The good news is agriculture trade between the two countries should be normalizing with expanded access for grains, oilseeds, beef, pork, poultry, and various other commodities, along with a new Chinese tolerance of US biotechnology and its results. Trump is still struggling to plausibly explain how China will ramp up US ag purchases to a whopping \$40–\$50 billion a year over time. The bad news is the split approach agreed to means the truly heavy-duty issues of intellectual property theft and technology protection are yet to be resolved.

Lastly, while there will be no action in 2019, the rhetoric and volume surrounding climate change will steadily increase throughout 2020. Both Republican and Democrat congressional and White House campaigns will be rife with either promises or plans on how the federal government can mitigate its impacts.

It is unlikely anything substantive will come from the campaign talk given neither the Democrat-controlled House nor the GOP-majority Senate has even begun the process of tackling climate change in any substantive way. One thing is for sure: there will be no Green New Deal (GND) even talked about in this Congress. The brainchild of Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), with bilateral support from Senator Ed Markey (D-MA), the deal would put the United States on 100 percent renewable, zero-emission energy sources in 10 years, while creating for the federal government a plan to calculate the “social cost of carbon” (i.e., a carbon tax).

When it comes to agriculture, the resolution reveals general naivete about farming, ranching, and the industries that rely upon and service ag production. The GND would have the federal government “work collaboratively with farmers and ranchers...to eliminate pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the agricultural sector as much as is technologically feasible.” The resolution also mandates sweeping changes in minimum wage, job training, education, housing, infrastructure, and transportation, among other identified societal shortcomings. The GND has been dismissed by both parties, both chambers, and the White House as unrealistic and a political nightmare. When Majority Leader McConnell last summer set a vote on Markey’s version of the GND resolution—admittedly to force Democrats, particularly those running for the White House, to go on record relative to the radical plan—GND failed 0–57, with most Democrats voting “present.”

R

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## January 2020

### **National Biodiesel Conference and Expo**

January 20–23, Tampa, FL • [www.biodieselconference.org](http://www.biodieselconference.org)

### **Association of American Feed Control Officials Midyear Meeting**

January 21–23, Albuquerque, NM • [www.aafco.org](http://www.aafco.org)

### **International Production and Processing Expo**

January 28–30, Atlanta, GA • [www.ippexpo.org](http://www.ippexpo.org)

### **International Rendering Symposium**

January 30–31, Atlanta, GA • [www.ippexpo.org](http://www.ippexpo.org)

## March

### **Pacific Coast Renderers Association Annual Convention**

March 6–7, Carmel Valley, CA • Email Marty Covert at [co@martycovert.com](mailto:co@martycovert.com)

### **National Grain and Feed Association 124th Annual Convention**

March 8–10, Austin, TX • [www.ngfa.org](http://www.ngfa.org)

## April

### **North American Renderers Association Spring Meeting**

April 21–23, Chicago, IL • Email Marty Covert at [co@martycovert.com](mailto:co@martycovert.com)

### **Pet Food Forum**

April 27–29, Kansas City, MO • [www.petfoodforumevents.com](http://www.petfoodforumevents.com)

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## Clemson Researcher Awarded

The Fats and Proteins Research Foundation (FPRF) presented Dr. Dan Whitehead of Clemson University with its 2019 Dr. Fred Bisplinghoff FPRF Innovation Award for his work on odor mitigation and environmental remediation. The award was established in 2015 and is given annually to an FPRF grant recipient who provides a substantial research contribution to the North American rendering industry. Whitehead, an associate professor in Clemson's College of Science, began this research in spring



Dr. David Meeker (left), FPRF, presents Dr. Dan Whitehead, Clemson University, with the Dr. Fred Bisplinghoff FPRF Innovation Award.

2012. His team partnered with professor Frank Alexis' group at Yachay Tech in Ecuador. Together, they have been studying the development of functionalized nanomaterials that can be used to capture volatile organic compounds associated with rendering odors. Whitehead accepted his award and presented his research at the FPRF Innovate Conference held late October in Carlsbad, California.

## Leather Organizations Merge

The United States Hide, Skin, and Leather Association (USHSLA) and the Leather Industries of America (LIA) have merged organizations. Effective January 1, 2020, the two associations will form the Leather and Hide Council of America (LHCA) led by current USHSLA President Stephen Sothmann. LIA President John Wittenborn is retiring at the end of the year following 15 years at the helm and more than 34 years working on behalf of the leather industry.

"This merger represents a critical step forward, particularly now, when the US hide, skin, and leather industry supply chain has more at stake than ever before," said Sothmann. "Soft global market demand, international trade disruptions, and an increasingly consolidated industry require our representative bodies to take bold action. The new Leather and Hide Council of America reflects our industry's commitment to building a strong future and will serve as the premier voice of the entire leather supply chain, both in the US and abroad."

In addition to the merger, USHSLA launched "Real Leather. Stay Different.," a global campaign that celebrates the versatility, beauty, and sustainability of US leather. The campaign features a new consumer-focused website at [chooserealleather.com](http://chooserealleather.com) and social media channels—Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WeChat—to amplify its central message: to choose and celebrate real leather.

USHSLA was founded in 1979. LIA was founded in 1917 as the Tanners Council of America and is one of the oldest trade associations in the United States.

## Darling Publishes First ESG Fact Sheet

Darling Ingredients Inc. has released its first environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factsheet that highlights the company's corporate social responsibility (CSR) commitment to sustainability. This is an important milestone that marks the beginning of regular disclosure of the most material and strategic CSR initiatives achieved across the company.



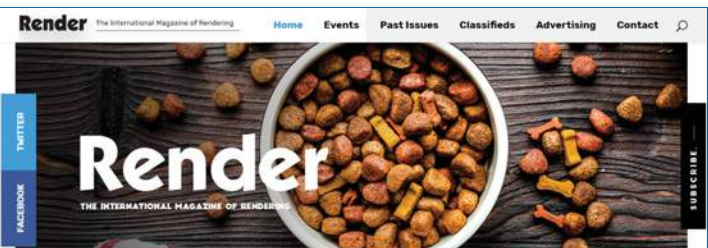
Darling's Sustainability Committee, in collaboration with its internal business teams around the world, built upon the company's core values of integrity, entrepreneurship, and transparency. These foundational elements enable progress on seven priority ESG focus areas:

- Clean air and water
- Diversity and inclusion
- Employee training and development
- Employee health and safety
- Food safety
- Ethics and anti-corruption
- Corporate governance

To ensure reporting meets the highest standards, Darling used internationally acclaimed sustainability accounting methodologies under the Global Reporting Initiative and the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board frameworks to benchmark achievements on the seven key performance indicators. The entire report is available on Darling's website at [www.commitment.darlingii.com/metrics/esgfactsheet](http://www.commitment.darlingii.com/metrics/esgfactsheet).

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## China Lifts Ban on US Poultry Imports

On November 14, United States (US) Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced China's decision to lift the ban on poultry imports for human consumption from the United States. China has prohibited all US poultry since January 2015 due to an avian influenza outbreak in December 2014, even though the United States has been free of the disease since August 2017. The United States exported over \$500 million worth of poultry products to China in 2013 and is the world's second largest poultry exporter, with global exports of poultry meat and products reaching \$4.3 billion last year.



US Department of Agriculture (USDA) teams are currently discussing access requirements with their Chinese counterparts. This step could remove the ban on US feed-related products and pet food that contains poultry products. The market for US rendered poultry meal was only briefly closed in 2015 due to the North American Renderers Association's (NARA's) combined efforts with the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Chinese importers. China currently imports about \$200 million of US non-ruminant products. Year-to-date 2019 US exports of non-ruminant animal protein meals are up 13 percent; however, exports over the past three months have declined sharply due to an oversupply of fishmeal in storage caused by China's decimated hog population from African swine fever. Short to mid-term demand for animal protein meal will likely decline as fishmeal stocks are cleared.

## Feed Association Names Cullman CEO

The American Feed Industry Association's (AFIA's) Board of Directors has appointed Constance Cullman president and chief executive officer (CEO) of the association and president of the industry's public charity, the Institute for Feed Education and Research. Cullman has been on staff since July 29 working with past president Joel G. Newman in preparation for his retirement on December 31, 2019.

Prior to joining AFIA, Cullman served as president and CEO of Farm Foundation. She also served as the United States (US) government affairs leader for Dow AgroSciences; senior director of regulatory, technical, and international affairs at the Corn Refiners Association; associate administrator for the US Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service; vice president of agricultural ecology at the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation; and extension associate at The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences.

Cullman has a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics and a master's degree in agricultural economics with an emphasis on international trade and agricultural policy from Ohio State. She hails from Marysville, Ohio, where her family owned and operated a cow/calf farm.



## Tyson Appoints new President

Tyson Foods Inc. has named independent director Dean Banks president of the company, effective December 20, 2019. Current president and chief executive officer (CEO) Noel White will continue as CEO. In his new role, Banks will report to White and oversee the company's business segments. Banks will remain a member of the Tyson Foods board and will be considered a non-independent director.

Since 2016, Dean has been a project lead and a leadership team member for X, the research and development arm of Alphabet Inc. (formerly known as Google). He joined the Tyson board in 2017 and serves on two committees—the Governance and Nominating Committee and the Strategy and Acquisitions Committee. Dean also serves on the board of biotechnology company Vergent Bioscience, which develops molecular imaging probes for life science research and development, where he was previously CEO. He was previously a managing partner of SEED Ventures, a group investing in and developing early stage healthcare technologies.

Dean is a former platoon sergeant and squad leader in the United States Marine Corps, and has a bachelor's degree in marketing and public relations from Miami University and a master's from the Harvard Business School. **R**

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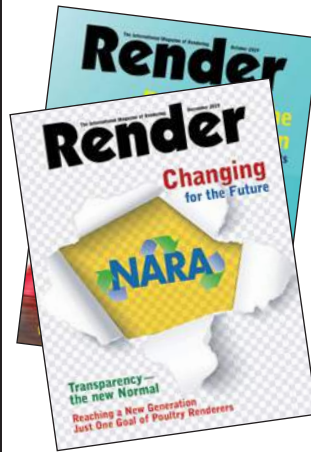
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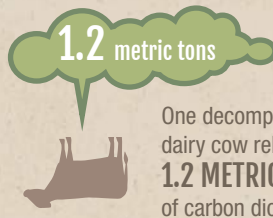
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