

## **USDA Assesses Civil Penalty On New Mexico Livestock Auction**

WASHINGTON, DC (December 15, 1999 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture has ordered Roswell Livestock Auction Sales, Inc. and Larry F. Wooton, Roswell, New Mexico, to stop violating the Packers and Stockyards Act and assessed them, jointly and severally, a \$35,000 civil penalty.

Roswell Livestock Auction Sales, Inc. and Larry F. Wooton were ordered to cease and desist failing to deposit into the custodial account within the prescribed time an amount equal to the proceeds receivable from the sale of consigned livestock. They were also ordered to cease and desist failing to reimburse the custodial account for owners' and officers' purchases in a timely manner.

James Baker, administrator of USDA's Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, said these violations are very serious because Roswell Livestock Auction Sales did not provide payment protection as required under the P&S Act to the consignors of livestock.

The Packers and Stockyards Act is a fair trade practice and payment protection law. It is designed to ensure free and open competition and to prevent unfair and deceptive practices in the marketing of livestock, meat and poultry.

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