

W.W. Livestock Inc. Accused of Fraudulently Selling Livestock

Washington, DC (July 20, 2000). - USDA has named W.W. Livestock Inc., O. Wayne Clark (president and owner), Ernie Kennedy, and Warren Young as respondents in a complaint that alleges that they willfully and fraudulently sold livestock based on false weights in violation of the Packers and Stockyards Act. They allegedly falsified scale tickets to support sales invoices and billed customers for fraudulently increased weights.

W.W. Livestock, a dealer, in Madison, Florida, allegedly sold 37, 833 head of feeder cattle based on false weights and these weights exceeded original purchase weights of livestock by 406,970 pounds. It is alleged that customers were fraudulently billed \$341,320.30 more than the amount due, if the original purchase weights had been honestly reported and billed correctly

Weights were allegedly falsified when the respondents used a type registering "weighbeam" that allowed them to print false weights without having livestock on the scale platform. The weighbeam, allegedly, allowed them to print false scale tickets for shipments that had already been sold. Additionally, it is alleged that they printed numerous scale tickets and failed to enter the date and time, names of the buyer and seller, and the initials of the person weighing the livestock, despite having notice of the livestock weighing procedures that they were required to follow under regulations established by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Should the respondents fail to file an answer to this complaint, it will constitute an admission of the allegations stated in the complaint. If they answer the complaint and deny the allegations, a date will be set for an oral hearing.

USDA has requested that an order be issued requiring the respondents to stop violating the Act, that they be suspended as registrants, and that appropriate civil penalties be assessed.

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

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GIPSA Release #41-00

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