



MISSOURI FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

P.O. Box 658, 701 South Country Club Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65102 / (573) 893-1400

May 28, 2025

Mr. Andrew Bailey
Missouri Attorney General
207 W. High Street
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Dear Attorney General Bailey:

On behalf of Missouri Farm Bureau, our state's largest general farm organization, I write to you with deep concern about a recent false report published by a local news outlet in north-central Missouri alleging the New World Screwworm (NWS) was detected in our state.

The detection and spread of NWS would be economically devastating to cattle producers across the United States. To that end, even a rumor that NWS was located in the U.S. can cause apprehension in the marketplace. That is exactly what happened on May 27. As a result of the false report, cattle futures plunged dramatically before partially recovering, causing a significant financial loss to the industry. From an industry perspective, it is plausible that someone maliciously planted a false story to make a quick dollar and take advantage of a large market swing. If this is true, it is a new frontier of market manipulation and those responsible should be held accountable.

Shortly after the rumor was published, the story was removed from the outlet's website, and the United States Department of Agriculture and Missouri Department of Agriculture each made statements that the rumor was false and clarified that NWS has not been detected in the United States. Thankfully, these statements were circulated quickly to stop the spread of the dangerous false report and help the markets recover. Unfortunately, the damage was already done.

The bottom line is that cattle producers are looking for answers and accountability. Specifically, MOFB requests an investigation into whether this false report was planted with the intention of fixing the cattle futures market. We respectfully call on the Attorney General's office to work with federal and state authorities to investigate the source of this false report. Thank you for your leadership in bringing clarity to this matter and, if necessary, seeking accountability from malicious wrongdoers.

Sincerely,

Garrett Hawkins
President, Missouri Farm Bureau