

STATE OF MONTANA

STEVE BULLOCK, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK
PO BOX 202001
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-2001



DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK (406) 444-7323
ANIMAL HEALTH & FOOD SAFETY DIVISION (406) 444-2043
BRANDS ENFORCEMENT DIVISION (406) 444-2045
CENTRALIZED SERVICES DIVISION (406) 444-4993
FAX (406) 444-1929

If you own livestock in Montana, you are required to pay an annual PER CAPITA FEE. Visit www.liv.mt.gov for more information.

Leslie Doely, Administrator
Brands Enforcement Division
Montana Department of Livestock
PO Box 202001
Helena, MT 59620-2001

September 1, 2017

Montana Livestock Markets

To whom it may concern:

On August 25th, 2017, The Board of Livestock received a request to modify the sale days at Billings Livestock Commission (BLS) and Public Auction Yards (PAYS). The requested changes are shown in the tables below:

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Current Sale Schedule	BLS	October - February Sale			All-Class, Year-Round Sale	
	PAYS			All-Class, Year-Round Sale		October - February Sale
Proposed Sale Schedule	BLS	All-Class, Year-Round Sale				October - February Feeder Special Sale
	PAYS			October - February Feeder Special Sale	All-Class, Year-Round Sale	

Per Administrative Rules of Montana:

32.15.104 CHANGES IN OPERATION OF MARKET

(1) The owner of a licensed livestock market must immediately notify the department of livestock of any changes in ownership, management, control, operation, the regular sale day or location of the market. All changes are subject to the prior approval of the department of livestock.

(2) Changes which result in ownership or control of the market passing to persons not already approved by the department of livestock to operate the market may be given approval only after public hearing before the department of livestock.

(3) All other changes may be approved without a public hearing, provided that whenever the board of livestock deems it in the interest of the livestock industry, the board may order a public hearing to be held.

The Board has asked for input from interested parties to assist them in determining whether or not to grant this request. The Board will hold a conference call on September 12th, 2017, to discuss this request and any comments that are received. Due to the often slow rate of mail delivery, I would recommend that you either email your comments or plan to call into the conference call to ensure that the Board receives your input.

Please submit comments via one of the following methods:

1. By participating in the conference call on September 12th. Call time and phone number information will be posted at liv.mt.gov/Home/Board-of-Livestock.
2. Email to ldoely@mt.gov

I would be happy to answer any questions; my contact information is listed below.

Sincerely,
Leslie Doely, Administrator
Brands Enforcement Division
MT Department of Livestock
Email: LDoely@mt.gov
Office: (406) 444-2925

Received 8/25/2017

Montana Board of Livestock Petition for Sale Day Change

For over 50 years, Billings Livestock Commission sale days have been Monday and Thursday. At the same time, Public Auction Yards sale days have been on Wednesday and Friday. The Monday and Wednesday sale days would not change.

We are requesting to move BLS from Thursday to Friday and PAYS from Friday to Thursday. The Wednesday and Friday sales would be feeder cattle specials and run from October through February, and some select specials throughout the year. The Monday and Thursday sales will be all class cattle sales and run throughout the year.

We feel this is beneficial for several reasons:

- We can utilize our shared work force more efficiently and reduce long, late night hours in the busy season.
- By steering consignments to select sales, we will spread numbers out over the week. This will reduce stress on the livestock and personnel and make for a more efficiently run sale.
- Our consignors will have a better opportunity to select their sale days for the class of cattle they are marketing without limiting the convenience factor.
- We also think this will be beneficial to the Brand Department by reducing the late hours on sale days.

We run two successful markets in Billings and serve farmers, ranchers, and Buyers. They cover a wide area in Montana and Northern Wyoming. We are moving into the third family generation of operation and plan to be here for many years to come. We have always had a good working relationship with the Board of Livestock and their personnel and will continue to do so.

We respectfully request that these changes be approved.

Sincerely,



Joe Goggins



Bob Cook

Department of Livestock Board Members & Staff:

Thank you for taking time to look at this proposed schedule change.

As we all know, change is hard for most people. However, we feel this a very positive change for all involved. While there are many reasons as to why this change is good, we would like to focus on three very important reasons.

1. This is a positive change for the producers who utilize the competitive markets of Billings. We will be able to sell like classes of cattle on a certain day allowing us to attract more buyers who buy only certain classes of cattle. (Example: Feeder only sales, featured weigh up sales, & stock cow sales.) We will be able to do more pre-sorting which will be better for the welfare of the cattle and also will allow us to do the best job possible in marketing the cattle. By having these particular days we will not limit the convenience factor that producers have always liked about Billings.
2. This change will allow us to be able to spread our numbers out over the week by directing certain cattle to certain sales. This is the main, and most necessary, reason we have proposed this change. By spreading our numbers out over the course of the week, we hope to limit our extremely long sale days. This will be a huge benefit to our employees, the Brand Department and the Vet crew. Like all businesses and State agencies, finding and keeping good employees is our biggest challenge. We strongly feel that the changes we can make to make it better for our employees, the Brand Department and the Vet crew **need to be made**. In 2016, the two Billings markets ran 252,009 head of cattle, 63,638 head of sheep, and 6,777 head of horses. These sales generated nearly \$640,000 in inspection fees and provide good employment to over 70 full and part time employees. We fully recognize this change is necessary to continue this.
3. Lastly, this schedule change will benefit buyers and truckers that use the Billings markets. Buyers will be able to attend class specific sales (ex: feeder only sales, featured weigh up sales, & stock cow sales). In 2016, over 35% of our cattle numbers were weigh up cows and bulls and bred cattle. By getting these grouped a little more on their own day we will limit yard mistakes, be able to control the length of the sales, and be able to tell buyers what we have in the line-up ahead of the sale. When the buyers have a better idea what they may be able to purchase on a certain day, it will allow them to line up trucks. With buyers and truckers having a better idea of the numbers, types of cattle and days of cattle selling, it will make it more efficient in moving cattle out to their next destinations in a timely fashion.

We have contacted all of the auction markets in Montana and have explained that this change is for employee's convenience and cattle welfare. By no means is it to try and overshadow a sale day, or take buyers from another market. Also the two Billings markets have always had Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday as sale days. We are not asking for new days, just wanting and needing to utilize our current days more efficiently. Billings Livestock has had a Monday sale since it started in 1934. The Department of Livestock granted Bozeman (now Headwaters) a day change from Friday to Monday around 1980.

In conclusion, we want to stress that we feel this a necessary change to continue the level of service and the volume of livestock that currently exists in Billings.

Sincerely,

Joe Goggins

Bob Cook

Ty Thompson

Bill Cook

Doely, Leslie

From: Vaughn Hoffer <vaughnhoffer@gmail.com >
Sent: Friday, September 1, 2017 10:53 AM
To: Doely, Leslie

I have no problem with Pays and BLS switching and changing sale dates.
Vaughn Hoffer
Glendive Livestock Exchange

Doely, Leslie

From: Lyle Allen <lewlive@midrivers.com >
Sent: Tuesday, September 5, 2017 10:34 AM
To: Doely, Leslie
Subject: Billings Livestock Auctions sale day modifications

Leslie, This letter is in response to your e-mail regarding the modifying of sale days for BLS & PAYS. As owners of Lewistown Livestock, my wife and I have no issues whatsoever in the changes that are being requested by the Billings Markets. I had a brief conversation with Ty Thompson last week and told him that we could see no cause for concern, and that I would send you an e-mail to that effect. So roll forward....make it rain and we'll all be happy!! Lyle Allen

Doely, Leslie

From: Montana Livestock Auction <mlivestock100@gmail.com >
Sent: Tuesday, September 12, 2017 9:35 AM
To: Doely, Leslie
Subject: Re: Sale Day Modification Request

I have no problem with these changes.

Montana Livestock Auction
Ted Odle

Montana Livestock Auction

T: 406.782.1884

F: 406.782.0204

PO Box 125

Ramsay, MT 59748

www.MontanaLivestockAuction.com



SUSAN B. SWIMLEY

Attorney and Counselor At Law

1807 West Dickerson, #B
Bozeman, MT 59715
Phone: (406) 586-5544
Facsimile: (406) 586-3130

September 11, 2017

Montana Board of Livestock
c/o Department of Livestock
P.O. Box 202001
Helena, MT 597620-2001

ELECTRONIC DELIVER TO
ldoely@mt.gov at 6:35p September 11, 2017

RE: Billings Livestock Request to change
Market Sales Day

Dear Board:

This firm represents Headwaters Livestock Auction located in Three Forks Montana. On behalf my client, the Board must not approve the change in sale day as requested by BLS.

The operations of each market must be maintained in a manner to provide for free and competitive bidding on the purchase and sale of all livestock. To allow the change in sale day will inhibit buyers from the Three Forks market area by precluding the participation in auctions in both Billings and Three Forks. Such limit on participation in the market is detrimental the both buying and selling.

This change of sale day is a matter of interest of the livestock industry. Pursuant to ARM 32.15.104, the Board much order a public hearing to be held.

Please confirm receipt of this opposition to allowing BLS to change its sale day.

Sincerely,

Susan B. Swimley
Cc: client