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**Ranchers commend bipartisan bill to stop unfair meat packer practices
Senators Enzi, Johnson, Grassley and Tester introduce reforms**

Billings, Mont. – Rancher Donley Darnell, with the Powder River Basin Resource Council (PRBRC) and the Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC), issued the following statement on behalf of PRBRC and WORC on the introduction of legislation that would end unfair practices by the meat packers that harm independent ranchers and farmers.

The Livestock Marketing Fairness Act was introduced by Senators Tim Johnson, D-S.D., Mike Enzi, R-Wyo., Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, and Jon Tester, D-Mont., today.

According to a news release by the senators, the bill would:

- Require marketing agreements to have a firm base price derived from an external source. This guarantees that local contract prices are not subject to manipulation by packer owned herds.
- Call for future forward contracts for livestock (cattle, hogs and lambs) to be traded in public markets where buyers and sellers can witness bids and make their own offers. This openness ensures market competition through multiple offers.
- Exempts producer owned cooperatives, packers with low volumes and packers who own only one processing plant. This exemption targets the source of price manipulation and ensures that the business practices of small family-owned processors are not impacted by the law.
- Guarantees that trading is done in quantities that provide market access for both small and large livestock producers.

Statement by Donley Darnell for PRBRC and WORC

“We appreciate Senator Enzi’s leadership and perseverance in his efforts to fix broken livestock markets. Senator Enzi has been a longtime champion for bringing fairness to livestock markets.

Ranchers want to compete in an open and public livestock market. A tiny handful of multi-national meatpackers, however, controls the livestock market and limits our ability to earn a living.

“This bill will go a long way toward giving Wyoming ranchers an opportunity to gain fair market access.

“We encourage Senator John Barrasso to join with Senator Enzi in co-sponsoring this bill.”