

## Farm Bureau Brief: Local ranchers profit from strong beef exports

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March 31, 2011 - Local cattle producers are seeing strong demand for their product as U.S. beef exports have increased 24 percent in volume and 43 percent in value since January 2010, according to the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF).

"An increase in U.S. beef exports translates to more customers and more sales for local ranchers," said Jerry Magness, Fannin County Farm Bureau president. "Texas ranchers have had to scale back their operations in the past few years because of drought and financial concerns, but we're hoping stronger prices and demand will allow us to expand our herds."

In the past year, the U.S. sold a total of 89,673 metric tons of beef at a value of \$355.6 million to a variety of countries, including Mexico, Canada, Japan, Korea and Egypt.

"Some of the increase in beef demand is due to the changing dietary preferences of our neighbors around the world. People in China and other eastern countries are starting to incorporate beef into their daily diet, and Texas beef cattle producers are able to supply product to those markets," Magness said.

Mexico is the leading customer of U.S. beef, purchasing 20,241 metric tons at \$74.9 million last year, while Canada is the second largest customer, importing 12,917 metric tons of for \$63.1 million.