

## **FCA President Message - Bo Hobby**

What is this dark cloud over our heads? All we seem to be hearing about is change, as if this cloud of change were all good. Those of us in the cattle business have an understanding and an acceptance of clouds as we know they bring many things: much needed rain, sometimes too much rain, fire, wind and sometimes false hope. Clouds also provide shade from the hot sun and this is refreshing.

My five year old granddaughter and I were on horseback watching clouds the other day and as she described them to me over her head, she grew from a tiny horseman to Vice President of the United States, horse vet and jet pilot in an instant. These clouds can represent frustration or hope. We beef producers find ourselves living with one foot in each of these two very different worlds. One is bound by our faith, home, climate, family, animals around us and our culture. The other world consists of societies expectations, consumer wants and the complex world of politics and new policy. Each of these has its own form of chaos and uncertainty, but the latter creates a heck of a lot more stress on those of us who chose agriculture as our passion. The possibility of a monstrous hurricane or long drought seem less ominous than the chains created by governmentally imposed regulations. First calf heifers are more manageable to us than consumer communication.

Given our options we would rather be spending time with our cattle in the natural beauty of our land, complete with all of its challenges than to have to deal with the whims of politicians and consumer activists. But we are not afforded this luxury. We must face and deal with both worlds, and the unknowns that belong to each. We will never be able to fully enjoy the unique lands that sustain us unless we learn to deal effectively with our role in the greater society to be advocates for our lifestyle.

That time is NOW! Your association is coming together to showcase its heritage at the Silver Spurs Arena October 3rd and 4th for the Ranch Rodeo Finals and Cowboy Heritage Festival. All I can say here is: Be there and bring a truck full of those who could benefit from learning more. It will do you and them a world of good.

Another way Florida cattle producers are coming together is with the \$1 Florida Voluntary Beef Check-off. The beef check-off dollar works to support our cause. Please join the ranks by taking action. You must fill out the Voluntary Beef Check-off card and share it with whom you trade to make sure your Voluntary dollar is remitted to the Florida Beef Council. Your Florida Cattlemen's Association is one that exists to contribute something positive to the world. It's powerful and we should inspire folks to be a part of it. We are focused on serving one another. Each of us has a gift and once again I implore you to share yours.

Please get involved in the political process. It is a critical time for our country and our industry. I think I must be becoming an activist 'cause I'm a proud meatatarian and I want the world to know it.

Show up, stand up and speak up!

Thanks for all you do.

Bo Hobby