



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

MAY 14 2013

Mr. Bill Bullard
Chief Executive Officer
R-CALF United Stockgrowers of America
Post Office Box 30715
Billings, Montana 59107

Dear Mr. Bullard:

Thank you for your April 5, 2013, letter to Inspector General Phyllis Fong of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) and me regarding OIG's audit report titled *Oversight of the Beef Research and Promotion Board's Activities*. In this report, OIG documented its audit of our oversight of the Cattlemen's Beef Board (Board) and the beef checkoff program.

You asked that Inspector General Fong and I take a number of actions. You should already have received a letter from Ms. Christy Slamowitz, Counsel to the Inspector General, who responded on behalf of OIG.

Among other responsibilities, OIG acts independently and objectively to perform audits and investigations of USDA's programs and operations. OIG also works with USDA's management team in activities that promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness or that prevent and detect fraud and abuse in programs and operations. I have full confidence that OIG has accomplished those objectives in its audit report on USDA's oversight of the Board. To strengthen its oversight of the Board, USDA is implementing the recommendations of the report.

I appreciate your interest in the beef checkoff program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Vilsack".

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary