

February 3, 2022

The Honorable Merrick Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland,

The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) writes to you regarding the ongoing investigation by the Department of Justice into the American meatpacking sector. As the nation's largest general farm organization, representing farmers and ranchers across all 50 states and Puerto Rico, we request a written update on the volatility in the live and fed cattle markets within 90 days of receipt of this letter.

With over 80% of the fed cattle market controlled by only four major packing companies, we are concerned about the control these firms have in the fed cattle market. With unprecedented volatility in the cattle markets in 2020 stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and preceded by extreme volatility in the fall of 2019 stemming from the Tyson plant fire in Holcomb, KS, we seek a written update on the Department's investigation surrounding the role the major packing companies played surrounding this volatility. While we understand the COVID-19 pandemic caused supply chain and labor issues within the meatpacking sector, the volatility in the markets during this time caused extreme uncertainty for our country's cattle producers.

We look forward to hearing from the Department of Justice regarding their investigation, so we can update Farm Bureau members and ensure them that adequate government oversight is being conducted in the nation's cattle markets, and that the markets remain fair for businesses, farmers and all American families.

Sincerely,



Zippy Duvall
President