

# Taking Stock

## ACA PRESIDENT LEO HOLLINGER



"WANT TO MAKE MORE THAN A BANKER? BECOME A FARMER!" is the title of Time Magazine's feature article July 11, 2011. I'm quoting Jim Rogers, investment whiz and one of Wall Street's towering personalities who happens to be a native of Demopolis, Alabama, "If you want to get rich become a farmer". He predicts farm income will rise dramatically in the next few decades, more than most other industries. According to Rogers, "The world has got a serious food problem. The only real way to solve it is to draw more people back to agriculture. What we need are more farmers."

Exports to wealthier emerging markets and a boom in biofuel have pushed agriculture into a growth business. Net farm income was up 27% in 2010 and is expected to be up another 20% in 2011. These kinds of numbers could make farming one of the best jobs in the 21st century with growth out ranking many other industries.

I'm proud to see agriculture being projected in such a positive way. Wouldn't it be great if increases in income did make it easier for young people to enter agriculture? Sure, farming can be hard work with many risks; however, we've seen big employment risks and instability in many non-farming areas lately.

ACA has always supported young people and encouraged their involvement in the beef industry. The increased effort with the Junior Cattlemen's program, the special programs for the 20-40 year olds and the thousands of dollars in college scholarships all are part of your association's work with our future leaders. These investments in youth will always bring substantial returns. Also our state and national check-off programs have marketing plans in place to position beef to be one of the primary foods (protein) that up-grades the diets of those people living in emerging countries. We're seeing this at work with today's high cattle prices. Exports now make up 13% of beef sales and has potential for more growth.

Meet C. J. Jackson (see photo on facing page.) C. J. is fifteen and has more knowledge, interest and involvement in the cattle business than most people twice his age. We're not kin, but for the last three summers, C. J. and I have been side by side tending to stocker cattle on a daily basis. He has a natural talent for handling livestock, detects health problems well and loves every minute of it. We swap my experience for his youthful enthusiasm. Most people give me too much credit for what I am doing when I've actually received lots more from seeing C. J. grow and mature.

C. J. started his stocker operation early on with 2 small calves on his family's acres in Camden. Since then he has rented additional pasture, got the necessary financing and improved his management skills. Last year he bought and sold 60 head. The stockers will weigh 250-300 lb coming in and 600-700 lb going out.

What a great pleasure it has been for me to work with C. J! I hope you can share a similar experience with a young person. It is so great to know there are young people coming along that love our great industry and will perpetuate it.

Thank you and God Bless,  
Leo



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Barbour.....	Mac Strickland
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Blount.....	Charlie Hest
Bullock.....	Gain Butler
Butler.....	James Owens
Calhoun.....	Matthew Smith
Chambers.....	Chris Langley
Charlote.....	Don Hinton
Chilton.....	Jason Staggs
Choctaw.....	Darron Jenkins
Clarke.....	Stacey Dungan
Clay.....	Donny Daugherty
Cleburne.....	Randall Skinner
Coffee.....	Mike Bailey
Colbert.....	Steve Stayton
Concub.....	Buddy Howington
Coosa.....	Howard Collins
Covington.....	Wayne Reynolds
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Macon.....	Jason Edmondson
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Marion.....	Jody Rankin
Marshall.....	Herman Bostick
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