

Frequently Asked Questions

When is the voting period for the referendum?

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (Department) will mail ballots to all California cattle producers on its official list on February 21, 2019. The voting period runs from *February 21, 2019 through March 22, 2019*.

How many ballots are going to be mailed?

The Department will mail approximately 19,100 ballots to all individuals and business entities who sold or owned cattle in 2018. There may be additional producers who are eligible to vote but were not on this mailing list. Please read the questions below to determine if you are eligible to vote and how to obtain a provisional ballot if you were not issued a ballot by mail and are eligible to participate in this referendum.

How do I determine whether I'm eligible to vote?

The California Cattle Council Law defines an "eligible producer" as: *a person who owns or acquires ownership of beef or dairy cattle, and who, upon request, provides proof of ownership of cattle. A person is not a producer if the person's only share in the proceeds of the sale of cattle or beef is a sales commission, handling fee, or other service fee.*

Each separate producer entity is entitled to one ballot for this referendum process.

Below are some common scenarios to consider when determining eligibility:

1. I am a sole proprietorship (individual) and I own some cattle, am I eligible to vote?

Yes, you are entitled to one vote.

2. I am a member of a business partnership and there are several partners, do we each get a vote?

No, a single business entity is only entitled to one vote, regardless of how many partners make up the entity. Thus, one of the designated partners should vote on behalf of the partnership.

3. I am a member of a corporation and there are several shareholders, do we each get a vote?

No, a single business entity is only entitled to one vote, regardless of how many shareholders make up the entity. Thus, one of the designated officers should vote on behalf of the corporation.

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4. I am in a partnership that owns cattle, and I also own a separate herd in my own name, how many votes do I get?

Each entity is entitled to one vote. Thus, one of the designated partners should vote on behalf of the partnership, and you would be entitled to an additional separate ballot for the cattle you own as a sole proprietor.

5. I am married or in a domestic partnership, do we both get to vote (two ballots)?

A married couple, or domestic partnership, who owns cattle together is entitled to one vote. However, if each partner owns cattle separately and separate cattle transactions are made in each partner's name, each individual would be entitled to a separate ballot.

6. I have a child (dependent) who is a member of 4-H who owns cattle and sells his/her animals at the fair, is he/she eligible to vote?

If the child owns cattle in his/her name, he/she meets the definition of producer and is eligible to vote.

7. I am single with two children in my family, the children help me on the farm/ranch every day, how many votes do we get?

You are only allowed one vote. The children do not qualify as separate producers unless they own cattle separately and make separate cattle transactions in their own names.

I have misplaced or never received a ballot, but I am eligible to vote according to the California Cattle Council Law, what should I do?

Visit www.cdfa.ca.gov/go/cattle to download a provisional ballot and mail the completed ballot to: California Department of Food and Agriculture - Marketing Branch, 1220 N Street, Sacramento CA, 95814-5603. All ballots must be signed to be counted. All provisional ballots received will be compared against the official list used in this referendum and only counted if the entity has not already submitted a ballot for this process. Furthermore, individuals and entities submitting a provisional ballot may be subject to further verification by the Department in order to confirm proof of cattle ownership.

When will the results of the referendum be made public?

The results of the referendum will be posted on www.cdfa.ca.gov/go/cattle approximately two weeks after the end of the voting period. In addition, a letter containing the results will be mailed to all eligible producers soon after the results have been posted. However, all individual ballots will be kept confidential.

If I have additional questions about the referendum, who do I contact?

Please contact the Department's Marketing Branch at 916-900-5018.