When cattle producers gather in Kearney Dec. 9 - 11 for the Nebraska Cattlemen's Annual Convention and Trade Show they will discuss a wide range of issues and help shape the organization's positions on pressing issues.

Among them will be environment related topics. Wind energy development is a top issue to be addressed, according to Duane Gangwish, Nebraska Cattlemen Vice President of Environmental Affairs.

The Nebraska Cattlemen Wind Energy Task Force has met twice to learn, from public and private interest, opportunities and challenges regarding wind energy in Nebraska.

The Nebraska Legislature will likely take up several proposals dealing with wind in the coming short session and NC will be an important participant in these discussions, Gangwish said.

Nebraska Cattlemen has Interim Policy regarding wind that focuses on the preservation of property rights and economical rates for Nebraska citizens and it will be revisited in Kearney.

In addition, the coming legislative session will likely see many bills introduced that will deal with issues such as Natural Resources District duties and responsibilities, compliance with the Tri-State Compact, irrigation reductions and inter-basin transfers, Gangwish said.

Eric Hansen, a cattleman from North Platte, is chair of the Nebraska Cattlemen Water Policy Sub-Committee and he has called a meeting in conjunction with NC's Annual Convention to review and revise NC resolutions and policies pertaining to water.

Disposal of dead cattle is another environmental issue cattle producers will address.

With FDA's passage of final rules prohibiting the introduction of Specified Risk Materials

(SRMs) into the rendering chain from cattle 30 months of age or more (effective April 2009), many Nebraska producers have found themselves in a dilemma regarding the disposal of older breeding stock.

Nebraska Cattlemen is working with a coalition of agriculture groups as well as the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Environmental Quality and the University of Nebraska to review state statutes and regulations pertaining to the transport and composting of dead stock.

Currently, statutes prohibit the transport of dead stock on the right-of-way unless the animal is in transit to a veterinary clinic or a diagnostic clinic for disease evaluation, or in the possession of a licensed renderer.

In addition, composting is prohibited for carcasses (or portions thereof) exceeding 600 pounds.

Nebraska Cattlemen is endeavoring to make proper disposal of these animals safer and more efficient for producers.

Hotel rooms for the convention are available at the Holiday Inn (308) 237-5971.

Anyone can register for the convention on-line at www.nebraskacattlemen.org or by calling the Nebraska Cattlemen Lincoln office at (402) 475-2333.