Ag Secretary Mike Johanns announced May 16 the appointment of Merlyn Carlson as the deputy under secretary for USDA Natural Resources and Environment. Carlson will begin his new duties on June 13, 2005. Merlyn Carlson was appointed director of agriculture for Nebraska in January 1999. In addition to being a former NCBA President, Carlson is a Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement honoree, recipient of the University of Nebraska Agriculture Contribution Award and a 2004 inductee into the Nebraska Cattlemen Hall of Fame. Carlson holds a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture from Colorado State University. Until recently, he operated a ranch in western Nebraska, where he also raised corn, wheat and alfalfa. He and his wife, Janice, have two grown daughters, Debra and Chris.

The Livestock Leaders Council joins the Department of Animal Sciences at Colorado State University in selecting Merlyn Carlson for the 2005 Livestock Leader Award.