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Chadrad Communications, Inc.
226 Bordeaux St - Chadron, NE 69337
308-432-5545 fax 308-432-5601
E-mail: kcsr@chadrad.com

(S.D.)-Blizzard-Lost Plains Cattle Will Hurt Area Economy

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 10/22/2013 02:17 PM

RAPID CITY, S.D. (ASSOCIATED PRESS) - A South Dakota Stockgrowers Association official says an early October blizzard that killed tens of thousands of cattle in western South Dakota will have a staggering economic impact.

Stockgrowers Executive Director Silvia Christen told the Rapid City Council on Monday night that cattle in the area before the blizzard were worth \$550 million, with a potential economic impact of \$1.7 billion on the area.

So far there's been no federal aid. A relief fund set up after the Oct. 4 blizzard that dumped up to four feet of snow in the region has about \$300,000 in donations so far. Christen says money has come from people in 48 states and three countries.

Ranchers in northwestern Nebraska and southwestern North Dakota also suffered heavy cattle losses.