

Metaeconomics clarifies this is actually an “Other-interest” problem, with not enough common ground in the Other-interest shared across all groups. Consider this following simple list pointing to how the Other(shared within each group)-interest might differ among groups:

Ranchers: high quality beef product, high feeder calf prices, value competitive markets

Feedlots: high quality beef product, low feeder calf prices, high prices on fattened calves, value competitive markets

Packers: high quality beef product, low prices on fattened calves, high prices on meat, value extra power in markets

Consumers: high quality beef product, low prices on meat, value competitive markets

Contention as reflected in the Law suits is that excessive power in the Markets, asserted by a small number of Packers, keeps feeder calf prices too low and prices on meat too high. We can speculate, using Metaeconomics, that those filing the Law Suits do not believe that actual expressions of Self-interest (which ideally would be Tempered by Empathy) reflect excessive Greed, that while every other group would accept the Price(s) out of a truly competitive market, the Packers do not share this Other-interest. So, the Law suits have shifted the resolution into an Other Forum, in this case a Judicial Forum, basically to find common ground in the Other-interest. There may be a better way.

Metaeconomics suggests the task is to find a common, shared across all groups, Other-interest. The example points to the possibility of some common ground, now, with everyone having “high quality beef product” in their Other(shared across the entire spectrum from producer to consumer)-interest. Could representatives from every level work to propagate a new, more palatable, acceptable Other-interest with more common elements? For this simple example, the Packers shifting their share Other-interest to also favoring “value competitive markets” would likely solve the problem?

The Judicial Forum will likely mandate a shared Other-interest, and, if Packers actually value power shared among themselves, which means they could pay low fattened calf prices and charge high prices on meat, the Court will likely mandate a shared Other-interest in competitive prices. This is what the Law does, generally using the empathy frame, which is all about being reasonable from every perspective, seeking mutual gain, like a Market with Empathy so achieves.

Perhaps it would be better for each group working with the other groups to try to find common ground on their own, acting on their own liberty and freedom to do? Perhaps Government (including the Judicial branch) could be asked to participate, and work to nudge common ground, building a moral community evolving out of empathy directed in every direction?

What seemingly is needed here is ranchers empathizing with feedlots, feedlots empathizing with packers, packers empathizing with consumers (and the distributors, groceries that bring the meat to the consumer) and vice versus, with the goal finding mutual gain? Metaeconomics teaches that the Invisible Hand of the Market, which apparently is not working (at least those filing the Law Suits believe this is the case) with enough Justice (Not Fair Pricing?), perhaps involving instead excessive, not Tempered Greed, Self-interest by the Packers, sometimes (often?) needs to be made Visible. Making it Visible, in turn, often requires some Government involvement through the Other Forums represented in

the Administrative, Legislative, and/or Judicial branches, seeking for a better balance in Market&Government.

Time will tell how this will work out. Metaeconomics helps make sense of what might happen on the way. Stay tuned.