

TAD BUSINESS

Producer contact information: Please remember to return your questionnaire to update the membership database. *If you have questions, please feel free to call Debbie at the office and she will get your question answered or direct it to the right person.* New contact information for the TAD office is:

471 N Harbin Drive, Suite 208

Stephenville, TX 76401

Phone: 254-965-5125 Toll free: 800-460-0382

Fax: 254-965-5135

TAD BOARD

Alan Vander Horst (Central TX), *President*
Willy De Jong (Central TX), *Vice President*
Steve Vanden Berge (Central TX), *Treasurer*
Leeann Moos (Central TX), *Membership Chair*
John Crawford (North Central TX), *Board member*
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Reed Mulliken (West TX), *Board member*
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Mark Hannan (East TX), *Board member*
Scott Opitz (East TX), *Board member*
Frans Beukeboom (Central TX), *Board member*
Pete Schouten (Central TX), *Board member*
John Cowan, *Associate Board member*

TAD STAFF

Debbie McInroe, Administrative Manager

TAD Annual Meeting: The Annual Business Meeting was held March 21st in DeLeon. The Board gave a presentation about the organizational restructuring of TAD and the goals for future direction. Willy De Jong gave a legislative update and announced that TAD has hired a new lobbyist: Jack Fickessen. Plaques were presented to outgoing board members and the Gold Can Award was presented to James Terrell of TKO Strategies for his service to TAD over the past 10 years. Board elections were then held. Elected to the Board for 2001 were Reed Mulliken, John Crawford, Mark Hannan, Frans Beukeboom and John Cowan.

ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

DOPA Credits: Texas Cooperative Extension is coordinating a Texas Producer Waste Management Conference for April 23, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, at the Tarleton Ag Center (Hwy 8). Four DOPA Credits will be available. For more information, contact TAD (254-965-5125) or TCE (254-968-4144, ask for Choyia).



INDUSTRY UPDATE

Cooling Ponds: The Texas Department of Health stated it would allow cooling ponds that meet the recommended operational guidelines in Texas. For information on these guidelines, please contact Dr. Ellen Jordan, Texas Cooperative Extension, at 972-952-9212.

Farm Bill Update: House and Senate, GOP and Democrats, finally agreed on spending caps for individual Farm Bill titles within the \$73.5 billion overall spending limit. The sticking point seemed to be conservation title spending. At the beginning, there was approximately \$27 billion ear-marked for Senate conservation, but after adjusting the Senate bill for the Congressional Budget Office's mistake of \$6.1 billion, that figure dropped to \$22 billion. At this point, Sen. Tom Harkin (D, IA) won't budge off the \$22 billion figure. Three days of wrangling with his Democrat colleagues in the Senate, however, resulted in an agreement on \$17 billion for conservation. The remaining title breaks out this way: Total spending is \$73.5 billion, with commodities getting about \$46 billion, plus a \$2.6 billion "cushion" for conferees. This is likely to be used to iron out differences on peanuts, sugar and dairy, as well as for special projects needed by individual conferees. Other sticking points in the negotiations continue to be payment limitations, packer ownership of livestock, the traditional fight over loan rates, and dairy, as Sen. Patrick Leahy (D, VT) fights to preserve his New England preferences with a \$2-billion counter cyclical package.

Comments from your Board...

What has TAD been doing? There have been many questions regarding what TAD is doing to help the Texas dairy industry. As Texas dairy producers, we must understand that we live and operate our farms in an urban state. We work long hours, tending our cattle and crops, to produce one of the safest and healthiest foods the American consumer eats, but that is not enough.

That is why TAD funded a grant with Texas A&M University. Dr. Sandy Stokes is our advisor and when TAD walks into an agency, Texas A&M University walks in with us. TAD now has an advisor in every county in this state – your County Extension Agent. These folks are here to help answer any regulatory or operational questions you might have: use them! *But that is still not enough.*

TAD has a full time lobbyist in Austin. His job is monitoring and reporting any state agency or legislative actions, which may impact the dairy industry. He also helps TAD focus on key politicians, who might not understand the dairy industry. Politics and money are always mentioned in the same sentence. For our lobbyist to be effective in our urban state, we must build a stronger TAD Political Action Committee. A strong TAD PAC will help us get the access needed to help our legislators develop laws that will benefit everyone in our state. *But that is still not enough!*

TAD has a full time attorney in Austin to help us understand how new rules might affect our industry. They also recommend action to these new rules that will be responsible to both the industry and the consumer. *But that is still not enough!!*

TAD has a full time administrative manager in the Stephenville office. Her name is Debbie McInroe and she is responsible for our newsletter and member communication. If you have a 'dairy' question, please call the office. She can put you in touch with the person or expert to answer that question. *But that is still not enough!!!*

TAD needs you. Everyone on the TAD Board, with the exception of our Associate Member, is a dairy farmer and our challenges are the same as yours. Our responsibilities to our business, family, and community are the same as yours. We must all become ambassadors for the dairy industry: show that there is a dairy family operating the dairy. Appearance is important not only from the road, but also from the barn. It does not cost much to keep it neat and clean. The industry needs your support of the environmental certification program. It will become a reality: embrace what it can and will do for your business. It is so much more than "just another inspection". It is a group of experts that will help you with all aspects of production, environment, and animal health. Get those three aspects of your business in order and profits will go up. *But that is still not enough!!!!*

We need every dairy farmer in Texas to look in the mirror and ask: Is my herd health management better than the best? Is my lagoon management better than the best? Is my business plan better than the best? If it is only good enough to get by, then do it better! Take the time to call TAD. Let our staff and Texas Cooperative Extension help you understand the new rules and regulations. Going to the coffee shop and complaining might make you feel better in the short run, but it does not help your business or our industry in the long run.

TAD cannot fix your individual problems. TAD can, will, and has been there for every dairy farmer in this state for over the past 10 years. Please take advantage of this wonderful association.



**Texas Association of Dairymen
471 N Harbin Dr Ste 208
Stephenville, TX 76401**

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