

TAD News... July 2004

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Managers Update

By John Cowan

If you haven't gone to the TAD web site yet, you should take a moment, sit down at your computer and go to www.milk4texas.org and visit our site. We are interested in getting the site more functional, informative and useful for you and others who want to learn more about your industry. To accomplish our goals, I welcome your feedback, ideas and suggestions. J.C.

TCEQ Update

On June 23, 2004, the TCEQ commissioners adopted revisions to Title 30, Chapter 321 Control of Certain Activities by Rule, Subchapter B Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, or the CAFO Rules as I refer to them. These adopted rules were published in the Texas register on July 9, 2004 with an effective date of July 15, 2004. If you are interested, you can find these rules on the Texas Register on page 6652 through page 6722. Then, on July 14, 2004, the commissioners at TCEQ adopted a statewide General Permit, No. TXG920000. In a short meeting with TCEQ staff following the commission adoption of the General Permit, staff indicated to me that CAFO operators eligible for a general permit would soon be receiving letters of instruction from the TCEQ permitting section. CAFO's located in the North Bosque River Watershed will be required to obtain Individual Permit and I am working with TCEQ staff on those procedures. Also, we are working with TCEQ staff to insure that third party service providers (environmental engineers and consultants) are included in the communication loop. During the TCEQ commissioner's meeting, Commissioner Larry Soward filed an amendment to the General Permit which will require a CAFO in the State of Texas, that if any part of the CAFO is within 200 feet of the main stem of a stream listed on the US EPA 303(d) list as impaired for nutrients, bacteria or pathogens but which had not had a TMDL developed and that CAFO utilized Land Management Units (LMU's) for land application of nutrients, the CAFO would have to maintain a vegetative buffer strip or provide other mechanical means to mitigate or prevent the runoff of wastewater from the LMU. According to Commissioner Soward, he stated he felt CAFO's needed to recognize the importance of pro-active measures to minimize potential runoff from agriculture operations and he believed this amendment would provide the protection needed to do that. As a part of the CAFO permitting process, the General Permit will utilize a Notice of Intent (NOI) document intended to expedite filing for and getting a permit. Based on my understanding, the NOI does in fact simplify and should speed up the process for a General Permit when the owner / operator has met the requirements of filing the NOI. It is critical that you have your NOI administratively and technically complete along with all the supporting documentation and the filing fee when you submit your NOI application. Failure to do so will only

delay the process. Work with your technical service provider or engineering consultant to be sure you are in full compliance with the TCEQ requirements. J.C.

LAGOON MANAGEMENT

By now, summer heat and southerly winds are having their effect on the fields and retention control structures. From reports I received it appears farmers were on top of their liquid nutrient management plans during the recent rains. As you know in Texas it can go from monsoon to drought in a heartbeat, so this is just a reminder for you to continue to manage your effluent in a responsible way and to take advantage of the dry weather to perform any necessary maintenance. J.C.

USDA Proposed Rulemaking to Mitigate (BSE)

The USDA-APHIS is taking measures to mitigate BSE Risks. Published in the Federal Register in Vol. 69, No. 134, July 14, 2004 beginning on page 42288 you will find the proposed rule making which APHIS is proposing. This rulemaking is in response to the detection of one imported dairy cow found in Washington State in December of 2003. TAD will work with other national and state organizations as we develop written comments to this proposed rule. APHIS and FSIS will consider all comments received on or before September 13, 2004. FDA will consider all comments received on or before August 13, 2004. I welcome your comments as well. If you want to send me your ideas or suggestions to be considered as part of the TAD written comments, please do so as soon as possible. J.C.

Ann Veneman Announces County Committee Election Process

July 16, 2004, Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman announced that the county election process has begun and that America's farmers, ranchers and other agricultural producers are urged to nominate local producers to serve on USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committees. I urge each of you to get involved with the FSA county committee election process. In my estimation we don't have sufficient representation at the county level with the FSA. Making a difference means getting involved, taking part in the discussions and decision making and not relying on someone else to do it. If you know that an opening for a spot on your county FSA Committee exist, get involved and support a candidate who can and will work for you and dairy related issues at your county level. Nomination forms (FSA-669A) can be obtained from local FSA offices or USDA Service Centers or online at the web address listed at the end of this article. Details on FSA COC elections can be found on the Internet at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/elections>.

<http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainervlet>. J.C.

Texas Animal Health Commission Updates

The TAHC National Animal Identification System (NAIS) stakeholder-working group is near completing an application for the Assessment and Initial Implementation Project that is now titled "Texas – Oklahoma – Osage Nation" project proposal. I want to recognize and thank Reta Dyess, dairy producer from East Texas who also sits on the TAHC as your dairy industry commissioner representative. I represent TAD on the stakeholder group and wish to thank Reta for her leadership. The project includes over 20 other organizations working together to come up with the best plan for Texas and Oklahoma. The current plan will have us tracking up to 50,000 head of dairy animals including Female Dairy Calves, Dairy Replacement Females, Cull Cows, Exhibition Cattle and Dairy bull and steer calves. It is intended to involve up to 25 individual dairy operators, and the Texas Dairy Herd Improvement Association is being considered as a third party service provider.

On July 10, 2004, the TAHC released information that shows 612 dairies in Texas have completed the fee basis TB testing with 184 herds yet to go. Those 612 herds amount to 274,025 head of cattle. As of the latest information, there has only been one positive herd detected up to this point with this current program. According to Dr. Dee Ellis with the TAHC, he said Texas Dairymen again have done what we asked them to do and we are confident that we will complete this testing program on time. Dr. Ellis went on to mention that the TAHC would be taking up for discussion and consideration soon a proposal to require dairy cattle to be tested for TB prior to entry into Texas. I expect the TAHC will take this up at the October meeting, however if the current trend of testing were to radically change, that schedule could be escalated. Dr. Ellis mentioned that he was aware of 7 Holstein steers, which have been identified positive for TB in other areas of the U.S., and USDA APHIS is conducting trace back efforts to determine where those animals have originated. That indicates we have a problem with Holstein steers somewhere and we have to find out why, therefore we need to implement the entry test

requirement for Texas as soon as we can, and we should work with contiguous states as well on a re. J.C.

For release---July 7, 2004

Vesicular Stomatitis (VS) Caseload Climbs; Disease Detected in Colorado

Three states—Texas, New Mexico and Colorado—now have confirmed cases of vesicular stomatitis (VS), a sporadic, naturally occurring disease that causes blister-like lesions, and can affect horses, cattle, swine, goats, deer or other animals. The infection is thought to be transmitted by sand flies or black flies and, while usually not fatal, it can cause animals to go off feed, become lame or lose milk production while lesions heal in the animal's mouth, on the muzzle, teats or above the hooves. Infected animals, and their susceptible herd mates, are restricted to their premises, under a short-term quarantine, to prevent potential animal-to-animal disease transmission. Colorado State Veterinarian Wayne Cunningham has reported that tests have confirmed infection in two head of cattle and two horses in Las Animas County, in southeastern Colorado, and a horse on a premise in the central part of the state, in Douglas County. In New Mexico, livestock are quarantined on 11 premises, due to VS infection. These include six premises in the Carlsbad area; three in Valencia County, near Albuquerque; and one in Grant County, in southwestern New Mexico; and one in Cibola County, in the northwestern part of the state. With the exception of infected cattle on two of the five quarantined premises in Starr County, all cases in Texas involve only horses. Other cases in Texas have been confirmed on one premise each in Reeves, Uvalde, Dimmit, Yoakum and Val Verde counties. To report potential signs of VS, owners and practitioners should contact their state veterinarian's office, so a disease investigation and appropriate testing can be conducted, at no cost to the livestock owner. Texas Animal Health Commission -- 1-800-550-8242. Reprinted from TAHC release



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